CHRISTMAS *in the* SCHOOLROOM

BECKLEY-CARDY COMPANY
Publishers *Chicago*

CHRISTMAS IN THE SCHOOLROOM

A BOOK OF ORIGINAL ENTERTAINMENTS

BY

NOEL FLAURIER, LUCILE CRITES
MARIE IRISH, PATTEN BEARD
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HOBERT O. BOGGS

BECKLEY-CARDY COMPANY
CHICAGO

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Printed in the United States of America

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CHRISTMAS IN THE SCHOOLROOM

RECITATIONS

A GREETING

NOEL FLAURIER

We want to wish each one of you
The happiness that is your due,
And hope that through the year you may
Prolong the joys of Christmas Day.

But please remember this is true:
Happiness comes to those who do
The one and thousand little deeds
In which are found the growing seeds

Of perfect peace and lasting love,
And other gifts sent from above.
Again we wish in every way
To you—a Merry Christmas Day.

NEW HOPE

NOEL FLAURIER

A thousand bells
Whose ringing swells
Across the snow-cloaked earth.

A thousand hearts
Where fresh hope starts,
And higher aim finds birth.

A clearer view
And thoughts anew
To start the New Year right.

So let this be
My wish to thee
This merry Christmas night.

THE SKY'S GIFT

NOEL FLAURIER

The sky sent down a Christmas gift,
It covered plains and hills;
It padded all the hollows,
And silenced all the rills.

This downy, snow-white blanket,
With diamonds sparkling through,
Stretches far off to the sky line,
Where it's edged with baby blue.

At night, when, down the western sky,
The sun goes slow to bed,
The baby blue is melted out
To gorgeous, flaming red.

And then, as dusk comes softly on,
A crescent, pale moon shines,
Along the hill the edge is changed
To rows of tall, black pines.

A BIRD'S CHRISTMAS

NOEL FLAURIER

I'm feeling, oh, so bad,
O'er the trouble that I've had;
It really is too bad,
For a poor, lone bird.

On Tuesday not a bite—
The same for Wednesday night.
Now *do* you think that's right,
For a poor, lone bird?

I've sat on window sills,
I've trilled my sweetest trills,
Through the bitter winter chills—
But no one cares for me.

With head tucked under wing,
On bare, cold boughs I swing.
Just dreaming of the spring.
Oh! no one cares for me.

But tomorrow I'll be gay!
I'll carol all the day,
And my pretty tricks display—
For it's merry Christmas time.

I'm hoping for the best;
The truth must be confessed,
E'en a poor bird should be blest
At merry Christmas time.

And probably you will be
The one to gladden me,
When my tiny form you see,
On the day of all days blest.

Throw the window open, please,
Out into the winter breeze;
Scatter crumbs beneath the trees
On the day of all days blest.

SIGNS OF CHRISTMAS

NOEL FLAURIER

Hills a-shining frosty white,
Hearts all dancing, gay and light,
Every moment a delight.
It's Christmas!

Turkey browned to toothsome crisp,
Grandma's pet by Grandma kissed.
Not a soul by Santa missed—
This Christmas!

Tree all weighted down with toys,
Tell those scamps to stop that noise!
Did you ever see such boys
On Christmas?

Far above in silence white,
Shines the star as piercing bright
As it was that first glad night
Of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS O'ER ALL THE LAND

NOEL FLAURIER

It is Christmas tonight o'er all the land,
Not just in our own town small,
But on far-off coasts that lonesome lie,
Hearts stir at the Yuletide call.

The snow-topped mountain peaks rejoice,
The valleys reëcho the strain;
And foamy waves breaking on rocky coasts
Sing loudly the Christmas refrain.

In small homes and great, in country and town,
On the city's bright pavement and street,
On road dark and still where lone traveler roams,
The words of the story sound sweet.

It is Christmas tonight o'er all the land,
Not just in our own town small;
For that story will live through the ages of man,
A tale that belongs to all.

THE DANCING ELVES

NOEL FLAURIER

"It's snowing out," I hear them say,
As snow clouds darken all the day.
Then to the window fast I fly
To watch the snow elves dancing by.

They whirl and twirl on icy toes,
In flurries, as the cold wind blows.

Each one is such a dainty thing,
It's curious how their kisses sting.

I cannot catch and hold one fast.
Their life's so short; it doesn't last
E'en while I open wide my fingers.
A wee, wet spot is all that lingers.

"It's snowing out," I hear them say,
"It's going to snow the whole long day."
And then in wildest glee I fly
To watch the elves go whirling by.

To grown-up folks it's only snow
That's drifting up on hedge and row.
It's all of fairyland to me.
I really wouldn't wish to see

A scene more pleasing than I spy
When to the window fast I fly,
Where whirling, twirling, fast and high,
The snow elf clans go dancing by.

THE TREE OF TREES

NOEL FLAURIER

Trees are the most useful things of earth;
It isn't hard to count how much they're worth.

In April bursts their glory all in flower,
The crumpled baby blossoms' silken shower.

The shade they give in summer, long and hot,
How welcome cool to find a resting spot.

And autumn brings the tumble of ripe fruit,
When noisy birds and boys are rich with loot.

But it's when the gray, old year decides to go,
That my favorite tree puts on its yearly show.

All through the summer it's been left alone,
For other trees we've each a preference shown.

But now that winter, hard and sharp and cold,
Has bared the choicest bowers and shorn the wold,

Here comes the prickly pine its hour to fill!
A dark green, rich against the white of hill,

It stands in all its hardy Christmas dress,
With winter's fiercest winds but a caress.

The Christmas tree! All bending in its glory!
A wonderland that's stepped from out a story.

The red, the blue, the sparkling, changing gold,
The dolls, the drums, the wooden soldiers bold,

The cart, the blocks, the cars that really run,
The games, the balls, the water-squirting gun.

Yes, trees are the most useful thing on earth,
But this one takes the prize for greatest worth.

We'll live without the others, if need be,
But we'll never, never spare the Christmas tree!

PUSS AND THE BALL

NOEL FLAURIER

My kitten made a great mistake
When playing yesterday;
He's only three months old, you see,
And very full of play.

With his big eyes he peeped around
Our little Christmas tree,
And there, a-dangling 'bove his head,
What did my kitty see!

A big, red ball, so shiny bright,
It gently swayed just so—
It was a tempting moment for
My little puss, I know.

He gave one jump into the tree,
And then there came a crash!
Out through the door my kitten flew,
A regular lightning flash.

The shiny ball in pieces lay,
My cheeks with tears were wet,
And safe behind the cupboard tall,
My puss is hiding yet.

SLEIGHING ROADS

NOEL FLAURIER

It's merry Christmas Eve,
And the sleighing roads are wide;
Their stretch of shining whiteness
Means a swift and frosty ride.

Then to the church we'll go,
The small church on the hill.
Its old cracked bell is ringing,
When we've only reached the mill.

We urge the horses on,
They respond with swifter stride—
For it's merry Christmas Eve,
And the sleighing roads are wide.

Oh! now we glimpse the church,
Shut in by clustering trees,
A yellow bit of light,
And voices on the breeze.

Look! Look! the candles lit!
Oh! Bessie, can you see?
And Tom and Jack and Bill?
Behold the Christmas tree!

Inside the church we sit,
Squeezed tightly side by side,
While Christmas songs are sung,
And "pieces" said with pride.

Then a long and restless wait,
A stamping at the door.
It's Santa with his bag!
We greet him with a roar.

The program's at an end;
We quickly get outside.
The ride home is the best of all,
When sleighing roads are wide.

CHRISTMAS EVE TONIGHT

NOEL FLAURIER

Now all the pine trees glitter
In their tinsel glory bright.
And the stars on top shine brightest,
For it's Christmas Eve tonight.

The sky is decked with golden stars,
That twinkle with delight,
No snow cloud dares unfurl its wings—
It's Christmas Eve tonight.

And through the lovely radiance
Each soul sends out a light.
'Tis the spirit of the season—
For it's Christmas Eve tonight.

PROUDEST SONGS

NOEL FLAURIER

The proudest song that's sung,
At merry Christmas time,
Is not the one the choir performs
In melody sublime.

Nor are the glad, gay tunes
Our family quaintly sing,
As gathered round the blazing fire,
We make the chimney ring.

The *proudest* song that's sung
At merry Christmas time,
Is the song of dolls and carts and toys
Sung by the Christmas pine.

A song of sparkling tinsel,
And apples in a row,
A song of red cranberries
That 'mid the popcorn glow.

A song of happy moments,
Of children's voices gay,
A carol rich in promise,
And the spirit of the day.

Deep in the pine tree's song,
I think I hear the rush
Of blinding storms that bend its boughs,
And valleys' evening hush.

Various are the songs
The tree of needles sings,
As toward the ceiling richly dressed,
It's proud, dark head it flings.

For the proudest song that's sung
At merry Christmas time,
Is the song of toys and Christmas joys,
Sung by the Christmas pine.

THE BEST GIFT

NOEL FLAURIER

The gift that pleases me
The very most of all
Is the whole, big, brand New Year
That to each of us will fall.

It's such a useful gift, I think,
I don't intend to waste

One single, tiny part of it,
Nor use its wealth in haste.

I'm going to cherish every day,
Each golden, worth-while day;
And at the end I hope that I'll
Be able then to say

That it has been a perfect year,
And I have done full well,
With no regrets o'ershadowing
The pearls of deeds I tell.

A CHRISTMAS SCENE

NOEL FLAURIER

The sky, as blue as a bluebird's wing,
Stretches from east to west.
Behind the trees the sky is red—
It's like a cardinal's breast.

The fields of pearls and diamonds lie
In silence rosy white,
And soon the long blue shadows creep
To warn of coming night

Alone upon the hill there stands
A single tall, dark tree.
Its branches are pagoda-shaped,
Like temples of Chinee.

And all the beauty of the earth
Seems but a lovely frame
For that lone pine—our Christmas tree—
Whose simple grace we claim.

This evening we will sally forth
With ax and shovel armed,
We'll cut it down and bring it home,
All its gracefulness unharmed.

The blue and red of the sky will have gone,
But the moon will light our road,
And homeward o'er the jeweled fields,
We'll bear our regal load.

MY CHRISTMAS GIFTS

LUCILE CRITES

I'm viewing the gifts they have sent me—
Three mufflers, red, yellow and green;
Six ties, polka dots, stripes and checkered,
The ugliest lot I have seen.

Some house slippers tied with pink tassels,
A bath robe with wide purple sash;
A box of cigars (if I smoked 'em,
My temper would sure go to "smash.")

I've handkerchiefs, both plain and fancy,
(They always send *them* by the box.)
Should I care to change occupation,
I'd set up a store and sell sox.

I know you have guessed I'm a bachelor;
(And "Oh, but he's cranky," you say.)
Oh, no, I am always quite happy,
Except once a year—Christmas Day!

THE DISCARDED CHRISTMAS TREE

LUCILE CRITES

I was a happy fir tree grown,
Was satisfied to live alone.
I did not care for vain display,
For I was not "brought up" that way.

Some men came to my home one day
And cut me down. We drove away.
They placed me in a lovely room
And soon my limbs were all abloom

With glittering lights and toys, so new;
And costly gifts of varied hue.
And then for many happy days
I heard continuous words of praise.

But now I'm on a vacant lot
And all my beauty is forgot;
It's very hard upon my pride
To be forever cast aside.

I was a happy fir tree grown—
I wish that I'd been left alone.
I *did* not *care* for vain display,
But *now* I miss it every day.

THE FALL OF THE MONARCH

LUCILE CRITES

In bronze and black and green stood he,
  His head he held so proudly;
His neighbors were a common lot,
  He often told them loudly.

He was a hearty eater, too,
His food he rudely gobbled;
Nor did he feed the hungry hoard,
Though by his side they hobbled.

But one fine day this monarch proud,
With airs so cold and perky,
Completely lost his head, because—
He was the Christmas turkey.

AFTER CHRISTMAS

LUCILE CRITES

Today my teacher said to me,
"You're just as bad as you can be!"
I didn't tell her, "No, siree,
That lots more badness wuz in me."

Today I didn't do a thing
But tie a harmless little string
Across the floor by teacher's chair
(I thought she'd see that it wuz there).

And when she tripped and almost fell,
A tattle-tale just had to tell.
And after that I put a worm
Down Mabel's neck, to see her squirm.

And next, before I'd stopped to think,
I spilled a bottle full of ink.
I never meant to spill the stuff,
But teacher said, "Hush! That's enough."

'Fore Christmas I wuz just as good,
And acted like a feller should;
But meanness just stacked up, you see,
And now it's leakin' out of me.

GIFTS FOR GIRLS

LUCILE CRITES

As Christmas draws near (though prices are dear),
I must buy some gifts for my daughter;
She wants diamond rings, fur coats, and such things.
(Extravagant tastes *I've* not taught her!)

She says, with a pout, "My car is worn out,
And I need a string of real pearls."
It drives me half crazy to buy for my Daisy,
It "breaks" me to shop for the girls.

GIFTS FOR MEN

LUCILE CRITES

As Christmas draws near, I'm frantic with fear
To know what to buy for my father;
I hope, for *my* sake, he'll lose or else break
Some article causing him bother.

A stick pin, or ring, or any old thing,
Or even his good fountain pen!
Then I'd have the fun of buying him one;
'Tis *so* hard to shop for the men.

CHANGING THE CALENDAR

LUCILE CRITES

I wish we had more Christmases
Than one, through all the year;
I'd like to change the calendar
To suit the children dear.
I'd make another July Fourth,
Thanksgivings three or more;
I'd have five times the holidays
That ever were before.

'Cause when a fellow goes to school,
He gets so very "tard,"
A-studyin' arithmetic
And other things as hard;
He *needs* vacations, yes, he does!
And all small boys agree
That calendars should all be full
Of holidays, you see.

'TWAS THE MONTH AFTER CHRISTMAS

LUCILE CRITES

'Twas the month after Christmas
When all through the house,
Not a person was stirring
Save me and my spouse.
The bills were spread out
On the table with care,
While wife and I figured
And tore at our hair.

Our children were gone
To some party or show;
While Ma and I hovered
At home, in our woe;
And we, who bought gladly,
Gave gifts by the score—
Were quoting that raven,
"Next year, *nevermore.*"

AN UNSELFISH BOY

LUCILE CRITES

A Christmas tree
Trimmed just for me,
I wouldn't like a bit!
I'd share the toys
With other boys,
And then I'd sure like it.

It ain't no fun
For only one
To run around all day;
And use the things
That Santa brings,
To help a fellow play.

I'd rather won
(Than play alone)
A tiny toy or two,
Than have a *sack*
From Santa's back
And play alone. Would you?

TRUE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

HOBERT O. BOGGS

Oh, Christmas is coming! That glorious time
We read of in booklet and sing-a-song rhyme.
And each of our hearts, as it rapidly beats,
Keeps time with thoughts concerning the treats.

Father and mother and all the rest
Are waiting and ready with eager zest,
To see the presents held in store
To gladden each of their hearts once more.

'Tis good to receive, but 'tis better to know
That some other is eager to show
How *your* gift made glad and brought delight,
With its message of love and kindness that night.

'Twas as gift our Saviour came
To take upon him a mortal frame;
And so, if we would happily live,
It's not what we get, but what we give.

WHO HAS SEEN OLD SANTA?

HOBERT O. BOGGS

Who has seen old Santa?
  Neither you nor I;
But he comes this way
In a reindeer sleigh
  And slyly passes by.

Who has heard old Santa?
  Neither I nor you.

But on Christmas Eve night,
When all is quiet,
Old Santa passes through.

Who has loved old Santa?
Every girl and boy.
For once a year
He brings good cheer
And fills our hearts with joy.

A PRESENT FOR SANTA

HOBERT O. BOGGS

From what I hear and all I can learn,
We all owe Santa one good turn.
He works for us as a slave might do
To make our toys, the whole year through.

Loving, kind, faithful, too—
He does a lot for me and you.
Has kept it up, too, ever so long,
Without so much as a thankful song.

Everyone knows old Santa is good
But no one shows any gratitude.
So I've thought out a dandy plan—
I'm going to work it if I can.

I think he's getting a little old
To be exposed to the bitter cold;
And he drives so fast and goes so far—
Instead of a sled he needs a Ford car.

So my plan is this: let every one
Who feels grateful for what he's done,
Just join with me and let's get busy
To raise a fund for Santa's new Lizzie.

THE RED LEAF

NOEL FLAURIER

At the very top of the maple tree
Hung a leaf of gayest red,
And there it danced when all the rest
Had long been tucked in bed.

November skies were gray above,
November winds were cold,
But still the merry little leaf
Danced gaily, as of old.

Then spoke the voice of Winter harsh,
And to the leaf it said:
"Why do you linger here, small leaf,
When you should be in bed?"

"I do not want to go to bed,"
Replied the saucy leaf,
"It's better here than down below,
Is truly my belief."

The other leaves slept on beneath
The bare and quivering trees,
Their red heads snuggled close and close
Hid from the biting breeze.

That night the Storm King flying came,
With wings of rage and ice;
Across the hills he bore the leaf,
Held in his cruel vise.

And nevermore the little leaf
Did any small child see—
The bright red leaf that gaily danced
A-top the maple tree.

All this but proves that even leaves
Must do as they are told,
Or sad their end will surely be,
As of this leaflet bold.

ELFIN BELLS

NOEL FLAURIER

[Bell sounds softly back stage.]

Far o'er the hill,
Through eventide still,
Soft elfin Christmas bells.
From silver tongue
Sweet accents rung,
Their age-old message tells.

"Rise up!" they plead,
"Your praise, we need.
It is the hour of birth.
Tonight the same
As when there came
God's sacrifice to earth."

So through the vale,
And down the dale,
The same, sweet echo wells.
The story old
Again retold
By elfin Christmas bells.

LOOK PLEASANT, PLEASE

MARIE IRISH

Yes, good old Santa Claus is coming,
With all his precious Christmas store,
And though you've handkerchiefs enough,
He'll bring perhaps a dozen more;
Though you've got all sorts and colors,
You'll have to find a place for these—
Handkerchiefs are always handy,
So—just—look pleasant, please!

What? You've got socks, and still more socks
A whole lot more than you can wear?
Well, Santa Claus is coming and
He'll surely bring a few more pair;
You say you're tired of Christmas socks?
Well, Santa's 'fraid your feet might freeze,
And he'll pos-i-tive-ly bring you more,
So—just—look pleasant, please!

Hurrah for Christmas, blessed time!
Another vase is on its way,
And though you've got them by the score,
You'll get some more, of glass or clay;

Your house is full of vases now?
  They stand about by twos and threes?
Well, Santa thinks they're lovely gifts,
  So—just—look pleasant, please!

You say your shelves are filled with books?
  That you read, and read, and *Read*
Until you're tired, and not a book
  Of any kind you want or need?
But books are *so* ap-pro-pri-ate,
  A few more on your shelves will squeeze;
So sing hurrah for Christmas Day,
  And—just—look pleasant, please!

Neckties, shirts, and fancy aprons,
  Comfy slippers for weary feet,
Breakfast caps and useless dishes
  Will come with Yuletide message sweet.
The Merry Christmas time draws near,
  Its song rings out upon the breeze;
Of course the same old gifts will come—
  But—just—look pleasant, please!

FROM PARIS

NOEL FLAURIER

LITTLE GIRL [dressed as doll].

Marie is my name,
From Paris I came.
I'm a *wonderful* doll.
  [*Places hand above head as if measuring.*]
Just see how tall!
And my curls are real,
  [*Caresses curls.*]
As you can feel.

Will you see how I'm dressed?
[*Spreads skirts.*]
In silks of the best.
I can shut my eyes.
[*Shuts and opens eyes several times.*]
I can make loud cries.
[*Cries* "Ma-ma! pa-pa!" *twice in artificial tone.*]
I'm from Paris, you see,
And my name is Marie.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHIMES

NOEL FLAURIER

[Girl dressed as old, gray-haired lady sitting in rocking-chair.]

When gay the Christmas chimes ring out
Through frosty winter air,
The music seems to say the words
With sweetness hard to bear.
It sounds that way, of course, because
I know the words so well;
They're written deep within my heart,
How deep I cannot tell.

[HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING, *played off stage by piano, violin, or any instrument.*]

Hark! They're playing that old song,
Sung for a hundred years,
Which tells about the herald saints
Who sang through joyful tears.
[*Music dies softly away.*]
The music, silver clear, dies out,
And all the city's still,
It's just a moment we must wait
In breathless silence till:
[*Soft music. Song mentioned in stanza.*]

"It came upon the midnight clear,"
I've known that one so long,
And all my Christmas memories past
I share with that old song.
Trumphant rings a Yuletide carol,
At mankind's heaven-sent boon,
And then the chimes play soft and low
This gentle Christmas tune:

[*Music,* Oh! Little Town of Bethlehem.]

"Oh! little town of Bethlehem,"
In humble beauty lie,
Poets and men exalt you to
The golden stars on high.
[*Music continues softly as curtain falls at end of stanza.*]
So to the world the Christmas chimes
Bring visions of the past,
And o'er the frosty, snow-bound land
The old-time reverence cast.

MR. JUMPING JACK COMPLAINS

Noel Flaurier

[Small boy dressed as a Jumping Jack]

I'm a Jumping Jack from the Christmas tree,
I'm just as nervous as I can be.
My legs it seems are never still,
[*Jumping side stride*]
My arms just flop and wave until
[*Flops arms*]
I wonder what my end will be.
[*Side stride with arms flopping*]

This jumping life's too hard for me.
[*Rests*]
Of course, I'm glad to please my friends,
I'll go to almost foolish ends
To make them think I do my best,
At flopping limbs and all the rest.
But there's a limit, I insist,
And these extremes I must resist.
Already I've lost half my speed
A good long rest is what I need.
My string is worn, my arms are loose,
[*Side stride with arms flopping*]
If you're not careful—there! you goose!
You've broken the string and serves you right,
For making me jump all day and night.
[*Limps off stage*]

THE CANDLE IN THE NIGHT

NOEL FLAURIER

Across the snow-packed, freezing world
A yellow beam shines bright.
It sends its glory through the dark,
A candle in the night.

"Peace, peace on earth! Good will to men!"
The yellow rays spell out,
And "Peace on earth! Good will to men!"
The winds of Winter shout.

The passer-by in sorrow wrapt,
The tiny child astray,
The erring soul, the aged one
Who knoweth not the way,

Will see the yellow beam of joy
That sends its small rays far,

And it will seem to each of them
A heavenly, guiding star.

So put upon your window sill
A Yuletide, blessed light,
And spread the Christmas spirit, by
A candle in the night.

THE SANDMAN

NOEL FLAURIER

[To be spoken by a small girl dressed in nightgown or pajamas and carrying a candle. She may have a doll or some toy in other hand.]

On Christmas Eve I always find
It hard to close my eyes.
I wish the Sandman would come round,
And take me by surprise.

Somehow it seems on Christmas Eve
That he's run short of sand.
He really should lay in a store,
There's such a large demand.

So many eyes are shining bright,
They glisten more and more;
It takes just double the amount
It took the night before.

I feel so very guilty, too,
Lying awake that way.
If Santa came, I'd be so scared,
I don't know what I'd say.

So Christmas Eve has come again
To gladden all the land.
I hope the Sandman's brought for me,
One whole big ton of sand.

MONOLOGUES AND READINGS

CHRISTMAS GIVING

MARIE IRISH

[To be spoken by a young lady costumed as an old maid.]

Isn't Christmas just the nicest time, and don't the very loveliest things happen when we are filled with the spirit of the day and go about shedding it on others? I've known a lot of Christmases—oh, of course [*simpers*] not so *very* many, but I'm sure this is the very delightfulest of them all.

Why do I think so? Well, there were several smaller things that led up to the *great* cause—you'll think I'm great for thinking so, but really, it *is* great. [*Beams happily.*] You know the Good Book says we must share, and that it is better to give than to receive—an' some things I'd rather give than receive, 'specially if it's patchwork holders, an' bags, an' dusting caps.

No, I never was one to shirk my giving, an' so I says to myself that I'll give old Gran'ma Wilkins a work apron. She really doesn't do much of any work, but I thought she could wear it anyway, an' maybe it would make her feel sort of busy. After I'd got that made an' tied up in tissue paper with a colored string, I made the very *cutest* little handkerchief for Jimmy Dugan—yes, the one who's lame. I cut a dog from red cloth an' sewed in one corner—well, it didn't *look* much like a dog, but that's what it was. Then I made a plum pudding for old Mr. an' Mis' Carter. It didn't really have plums in it, you know; they never do, but it was a *real* Christmas pudding.

Something queer 'bout the Christmas spirit, ain't there? The more you do, the more you want to do for folks; so when I'd got those things done, I thought I'd make a necktie for Samuel Boskin. [*Very surprised.*] W'y, I don't

see anything queer about that. I've known him since before he married his first wife—poor thing, it was sad the way she was carried off by the hand of fate an' pneumonia. I think it was real Christmaslike in me to make him a necktie, a red one with blue dots worked on it, so's it will look cheerful.

When I got it finished, I thought maybe I better give it to him a little before Christmas, so's if he'd like to wear it to the entertainment, you know, he'd have it ready; besides, well—I'm not one to be lookin' for returns, but sometimes folks *do* like to give a little something back to the giver, you know. So I took it over to his house, having wrapped it in tissue paper an' tied it with bright cord.

W'y, no! Why should I feel bashful 'bout takin' it over? Don't the Good Book say we should give Christmas presents? I took it over an' says to Samuel that I had been makin' Christmas gifts for one an' another, an' fin'lly took it in mind to make one for him; then I give him the package.

How did he act? Well, to tell the truth, he acted like he felt—surprised! You could see as plain as day that he was. He hadn't been lookin' for a present from me, not in the least; but then, the Good Book don't say to give gifts to those as are expectin' 'em.

Well, he untied the package, right then, an' looked at it an' he says, "W'y, it's a necktie." Yes, he knew right away what it was—even if I *did* make it. Oh, you could see that he was surprised, and pleased, of course. He says, "W'y, Mary Ellen, this is fine. I—I'd like to have you make neckties for me right along." Now [*simpers*] wasn't that sentimental? Just think of his perposin' right off, like that. I—yes, I really was a little surprised, but I didn't lose my head. I just says, "Well, Samuel, I don't know but I'd make you as good a wife as anybody you'd find." He seemed sort of amazed that I'd take him so quick, but a body

could do worse. Did he give me a present? W'y, what better present could I want than Samuel himself?

PETER BUYS A PRESENT

MARIE IRISH

Good mornin', ma'am. Wal, yes, I kinder 'lowed like I'd buy something. Yes, that's it—something for a Chris'mus present. An' I want it to be real nice, too. I ain't goin' to be skimpy in buyin' it. Bein' as Christ'mus don't come very often I'm goin' to sort of blow myself, as the sayin' is.

Er—wal, no, it ain't for my father—[*confidentially*]—you see, I'm planning' to give pap a shote for a present; no, ma'am, I didn't say shirt—*shote,* a pig, you know. Bill Hawkins has got some to sell an' I thought pap'd be real pleased with one for Chris'mus.

Er—wal, no, it ain't for my ma. I've bought 'er a nice present already. It's a real useful gift an' that's what ma likes; it's a kitchen apron, sort of trimmed up to look kind of like it was for afternoons. You see, Milly Beggs made some of 'em to sell for Chris'mus presents, an' she got me to buy one for ma.

Er—wal, yes it's—for a—young lady. No, it—that is, it ain't for my sister. [*Gets confused*]. She's—I—you see, she's—it's a—young lady. Yes, ma'am, that's it—one my friends. Wal, to tell the truth, I don't know what I want. I thought maybe you, bein' as you work here in the store, could kind of help me pick out something.

What? Hoes? No, I don't want to give her hoes, seein' as they live on a farm, they've got plenty of hoes around an' she—wal, she don't take much to workin' in the garden. Oh—h—h, you mean stockin's? I thought you was talkin' 'bout hoes. Wal, stockin's—I don't guess I want to buy

'er them, 'cause she seems to have plenty of 'em. Er—I—that is—I've noticed she has got 'em in 'bout all the colors that's bein' worn most. She's a real hand to dress up, an' maybe you won't believe it, but when she wears a brown dress she wears brown stockin's, and when she wears a white dress she wears white stockin's, an' so on.

Wal, yes, I want something real nice. I want 'er to know that I'm not close when it comes to buyin' Chris'mus presents, an' I don't mind spendin' a dollar, or even a little more. What's that? Lonzher-ray? Wal—I—I—don't know if she's got any of 'em already or not. You see, I don't know what they look like, 'an—[*very confused*] oh, it's—them? Wal, I don't guess I'd better give 'er things like that. I—wal—you know.

Gloves? Ye—es, that might be all right, only—no, I don't know what size. No, ma'am, I don't know if her hand's very big—you see, we ain't got to the point of holdin' hands yet. I'm—wal, the truth is, I'm sort of bashful when it comes to bein' forward.

Han'kerchiefs? Wa—al, I don't know. I'd kind of like something a little more diff'rent than jest han'kerchiefs. They're kind of common, ain't they? I don't s'pose you've got a nice photograph album for—wal, that ain't *too* high. My pap gave ma one 'fore they was married an' she liked it so well she's got it yet. What. They've gone out of style? Wa—al, that settles it. I've got to have something that's stylish, if I go as high as a dollar an' a half for it.

A bottle of perfum'ry? Say, that's a good suggestion. I knew you'd know what I should ought to buy. You see, if I give 'er perfum'ry, I'll git to enjoy that too, 'specially if I git so's I can spunk up an' set sort of close by 'er on the sofy when I drop over to call. Yes, I'll take some perfum'ry—real nice an' strong so the smell stays on a han'kerchief all the ev'nin'. All right, le's look at it.

JOYS OF CHRISTMAS TIME

MARIE IRISH

Say' mom, can't I have a piece of mince pie, right now? Aw, it won't hurt me, honest, an' you've got a row of 'em settin' there on the pantry shelf. Well, that don't matter, if they are for Chris'mus dinner; they'll be plenty left, mom. Can't I have a piece? Honest, I ain't had a piece of mince pie for an aw—aw—awful long time. Well, *why* do I have to wait? It'll taste better right now. I don't like Chris'mus—can't have nothin' I want an' have to wait, an' wait for things, an' time pokes 'till I'm most ready to die.

Say, pop, ain't you goin to git that rifle for Chris'mus that I've been teasin' for? I want it so bad I'm 'bout ready to croak. A lot of the boys have got guns—real ones that shoot. What'd I do with a gun? W'y, I'd go huntin' an'—an' lots of things. Aw, I wouldn't shoot myself, no such a thing. I guess I'd know better'n that. What would I want to shoot myself for, I'd like to know? Say, now, pop, ain't you goin' to buy me that gun for Chris'mus? It would save us money, don't you see, 'cause I could kill things for us to eat—like rabbits, an' squirrels, an' bears, an' muskrats, an' deer, an'—an' lions, an'—lots of things that'd save us buyin' meat. Can't I have a gun, pop? An' say, like's not I could save mom's life some day. You don't see how? Well, now, look here: S'pose some Injuns come along some day when you was gone, an' they was goin' to kill mom—zip! with a scalpin' knife, an' just when they was ready to kill 'er, w'y, I'd shoot 'em all dead with my Chris'mus rifle. Wouldn't you be glad then that you'd got it for me? I guess you would. Say, pop, if you don't gimme a gun for Chris'mus I—I—I'm goin' to—well, I ain't goin' to tell what I'll do, but it'll be somethin'

that'll make you wish you hadn't been so mean to me, an' that's true, too.

Mom, can't I stay up tonight an' help put things on the Christmas tree? I think that'd be a lot of fun—can't I? Well, why not? Yes, I'm goin' to stop teasin'—only I ain't teasin', I'm only askin' a few questions. My land sakes, you don't mind if I ask a few questions, do you? Teacher says we've got to ask questions to find out 'bout things. You don't want me not to know nothin', do you? S'posin' that Christopher Columbus hadn't asked if he could sail 'cross the ocean an' find 'Merica? S'posin' he hadn't teased for those ships—that'd been great, wouldn't it? Maybe, like's not 'Merica wouldn't have been found yet—nor the United States neither—then where'd you be, I'd like to know?

Mom, can't I? Well, gee, don't you know what I was talkin' 'bout a minute ago? You must have a awful good forgettery. I want to stay up an' help trim the Chris'mus tree, can't I? Say, I know a dandy way to trim it—like Shorty Dolan said they're goin' to fix theirs. Shucks, I don't see why I can't. I don't think that Chris'mus is any fun a tall. I can't do a thing I want to. I wish I was up in the—up where the Eskimos live an' I'd go out huntin' polar bears, an' git killed—that's what I'd do. You're mean as you can be to me. I've a good notion to tell pop what you've got hid upstairs for his Chris'mus present. [*Dodges*] Well, you needn't slap me—I ain't rea'lly goin' to tell.

Say, pop, can't I—yes, sure, I'm goin' to stop askin' questions. What? Go to bed? Go to bed this early? W'y, I ain't even—well, all right; I'm goin'. I'll go to bed—an' I'll stay there, too. I ain't goin' to git up in the mornin' to see none of those silly things you've got for me. You can take 'em an' give 'em to little Jimmy Baxter. Chris'mus ain't the least bit of fun an'—yes, I'm goin'!

JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS

MARIE IRISH

It is just before Christmas and—well, I guess you know what that means, don't you? Hum—m—m, ye—es, rather! If there is any time that is more distractioning than another, it is—just before Christmas. You know how it is—so much to do all at once, and so many things to remember that you've forgotten, and watching to see that you don't let out any of your Christmas secrets, and wondering what you'll do with the presents you get that you don't want—well, you know how it is.

I'm just worked to *death* trying to get presents finished. I'm thankful I finished that exquisite breakfast cap for Aunt Melissa. She ought to be crazy about it—the colors are so ravishing. It won't be becoming to her, of course, because she can't wear rose pink and sea green *at all*, but the colors were so lovely in the shop I just *couldn't* resist them, and of course, it isn't my fault that Aunt Melissa is homely and doesn't look well in dainty colors. I think it's dreadfully trying at Christmas, to have relations that don't seem to fit the presents you want to buy, don't you? Now there's Uncle William; he doesn't want any books except history, and books on science and those dry things that are so—well, so dry that one should use them for kindling; while I just love to buy sweet books of poetry, with sort of—well, you know, sentimental pictures, and bits of trees and brooks, and illustrations that seem sort of human. Isn't it a trial to have an uncle like that? [*Sighs*] But then, it seems as if all my relations are queer about what they want for Christmas.

And isn't it a nervous strain—waiting to see what folks are going to give you, and worrying about whether things will harmonize with what you already have? [*Sighs*] It just *does* seem as if my relatives use the *queerest* taste in

selecting gifts for me. I suppose it's unkind to say it, but they're more inclined to buy what suits *them* than what suits *me,* the one they're giving it to. Have you ever noticed that trait in your uncles, and aunts, and cousins—and even grandparents? It seems to me people should be careful about this, because doesn't the Bible say Christmas is to be a time of *good will?* How can one be filled with good will when most of one's Christmas presents are so—so—well, you know, get on your nerves, and aren't what you wanted—*at all.*

Yes, as I said, I'm utterly and simply *worn out* trying to get ready for Christmas. I'm sure I shall not be able to feel merry—I'll be too tired. By the way, I don't see why they couldn't have named Christmas Jane or Sarah instead of Mary. Why wouldn't *Sarah* Christmas do as well as *Mary* Christmas? Then one wouldn't feel that one *had* to be gay whether he wanted to or not. I suppose the rest of you are worn out too. You know how wearing it is to go shopping and it seems as if I've spent just *days* going about the stores looking at things I'd like to have folks buy me for Christmas. Queer, isn't it, how many more things you run across that are suitable for yourself than for those you're out hunting presents for? I spent three hours trying to discover something for Cousin Maude—I didn't want to pay too much, you know—and in that time I saw fifty things that would have been lovely for her to give me.

Anyway, what ever else happens, I hope I won't get a raft of Christmas cards. It is *dreadfully* depressing to be expecting a present and only get a—cheerful card; you all know how that is, I'm sure. And from some of the folks who have plenty of money, too. I think it's just plain shirking of one's duty to send cards instead of gifts—though *don't* say I said so.

Well, at least I can be thankful that most of my shopping is done; if I run short on presents I can send some pretty—*Christmas cards!*

JUST LIKE A WOMAN

LUCILE CRITES

Polly Eakin and her husband, Bill, always gave each other wonderful Christmas gifts. Bill Jr. and little Marie came in for their share of the finest toys on the market, although Bill's salary was nothing to brag about.

The main reason for this was that Polly and Bill both came from families noted for their splendid holiday celebrations, and they had been brought up to just that sort of thing. In fact, their love affair began at a Christmas house party—but that is another story.

The children were in bed. Bill and Polly sat close together in front of a blazing log fire.

"Bill, dear, I want to ask a favor of you. I know you will not like it a bit at first, but promise me you will do as I ask, anyhow."

"Ask away, Polly, old dear, but even your down-trodden husband refuses to promise with his eyes shut."

"Yes, I know, you wouldn't generally, but just this once, I think you might."

Polly went around and sat on the arm of Bill's chair. Bill put his arm around her, but said nothing.

"Well, then, if you won't promise first, I'll tell you. I don't want you to give me a single thing for Christmas this year. Honest, I mean it."

"But Polly dear, a Christmas without a gift for you wouldn't be Christmas at all. Besides I have already picked it out—in my mind. I can't see any sense in that plan at all. Why the idea?"

"Well, I've been going over the accounts and we are spending such a lot of money. Since we bought our dear little home, we have never quite caught up, you know. I do not feel as though I could enjoy a present when I know how hard you are working to get out of debt. Of course I will not give you anything either. We will buy a few cheap toys for the children and put what we usually spend on ourselves in the bank. What had you decided to get me, Bill?"

"Never mind, since you don't want it. I warn you it will be a stupid Christmas, with nothing to get up for Christmas morning."

"Oh, no! We'll have a tree for the children, as usual. We will enjoy that. I'm really in earnest about this."

Just one week before Christmas Polly went shopping for the children. She saw such wonderful mechanical toys, beautiful dolls, and the prettiest furs the shops had ever shown. She thought with a sense of disappointment that Bill would probably have given her furs, if she had not insisted that he give her nothing. Her old set of mink was looking rather shabby.

She finished buying the toys and, walking through the Men's Department of the store, she saw a wonderful "comfy" dressing-robe. A great, big, woolly one. So soft, and with a dark red silk cord around it. Just the thing for Bill. He always loved dark red. She thought she would just stop and look at it—maybe price it. She had no thought of buying. The clerk came up and, taking the robe off the rack, tried it on.

"Dandy, isn't it?" he said, encouragingly. "It is one of the few large sizes. On sale today for $25.00 and it's a regular bargain."

Polly hesitated.

"We have cheaper ones, of course, though they haven't the style or quality of this one. Perhaps you would like to see some of the others?"

"No, if I take one, it will be this one. I only wanted to look at it. I'll come back after lunch and let you know."

It was Christmas eve and Bill and Polly were dressing the tree. Both were rather silent and Bill was almost glum.

"Hand me the biggest star, will you, dear? Then I'll be through. What is the matter? Doesn't it seem like Christmas?"

"Sure! Don't mind me. Step down here and take a look at this aeroplane. Looks like the real thing, doesn't it? Bought it at the ten-cent store for twenty-five cents."

"Isn't it cunning? Bill Jr. will be crazy about it. I do hope Marie will like her doll. It is the cheapest one she ever had, but I made it lots of lovely clothes."

"She'll like it all right. Let's turn in. I'm dead tired. Besides, the kids will be getting up before we're fairly asleep."

"You run along, I want to sweep up these papers first."

Polly took a long time to clear the room. Then she peeped in to see if Bill was asleep. He was. She pulled a big box from its hiding place and laughed to herself at the surprise Bill had in store for him. She put the box on a chair, then thought better of it, placed it behind the tree and went to bed.

Next morning when Polly opened her eyes Bill was nowhere to be seen. She ran into the children's room and there she found him, helping them dress.

"Merry Christmas, everybody!" she called.

"Merry Christmas, Mother!" "Merry Christmas, Polly!"

"Hurry up, Dad, and get me buttoned up. Come, Mother, and help him, he's so slow."

All together they went in to the tree. When everything was distributed, Marie undressing her doll and Bill Jr. doing his best to fly his airship, Polly went over to the big box and took the lid off.

"Bill Sr., from Mrs. Santa Claus," she called merrily. Before she could reach him, Bill Sr. had darted into the hall closet and returned with a wonderful set of black fox furs.

"Polly, dear, I couldn't stand it not to give you something. I held out till yesterday, but it was too hard. Will you forgive me for not doing as you asked?"

She held the robe and he slipped into it with a sigh of content.

"Forgive, you, you old silly. I'd never have forgiven you if you *had* done as I asked," said Polly, as she stroked her muff.

DIALOGUES AND PLAYS

CHRISTMAS COOKIES

HOBERT O. BOGGS

CHARACTERS

TOM.....*Boy of medium size and age*
GEORGE.....*His brother*
KATE, LOIS.....*Sisters of the boys*
MRS. ALLEN.....*Mother of the children*

COSTUMES

Everyday clothes, modern.

PROPERTIES

Cookies and ginger cakes. Wood for boys to carry in.

SCENE: *Plain interior of a home*

Discovered: TOM *and* GEORGE

TOM. Say, George, did you know that Christmas will soon be here?

GEORGE. Did I know it? Why, that's all I've been thinking about for a week.

TOM. I am anxious for the day to roll around myself. We're going to have a turkey, I almost know. I can taste it now.

GEORGE. I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to hide in the kitchen when mamma puts the turkey on to cook and go turk, turk, turk! [*Imitates turkey call.*] I'll bet she gets scared when she thinks that the turkey has come back to life again. Won't she jump?

TOM. I guess so. I'd try that with you, but I'm afraid that she might get scared so bad that she'd throw hot water on us or something like that.

Enter LOIS.

LOIS. Which would be just what you'd need, too.

TOM. Oh, you think so, do you? Well, Miss Buttinsky, you couldn't think of anything like that to do. Girls are such sissies they never want anyone to have a little fun, anyway.

LOIS. Well, I wouldn't call that fun, if *I'd* thought of it.

GEORGE. What could you think of any better?

LOIS. Why, just now I have thought of taking Aunt Jane some of the cookies that mamma has just baked. How is that?

TOM. Oh, is that what you've got in that sack?

LOIS. Yes. I'm waiting now for Kate to go with me. I see her coming yonder now. She's taking gingerbread.

GEORGE. Gingerbread and cookies, Tom. Say, we could think of something better to do with them than taking them to Aunt Jane, couldn't we?

TOM. I believe we could.

Enter KATE.

TOM. Say, Kate, Lois said that you were both going over to Aunt Jane's to take her some gingerbread and cookies. Is that right or not?

KATE. That's right. We thought of Aunt Jane, who used to give us so many good things to eat before she got crippled and we decided to take her a few goodies for her Christmas dinner.

GEORGE. That is mighty nice of you, girls. But say, Aunt Jane can't eat all the cookies and gingerbread that

both of you have, and I know two little boys who would be mighty glad to get part of them. Why not divide your good things and let us satisfy the little boys as well as Aunt Jane? [*Nudges* TOM *and winks slyly at him.*]

LOIS. Why, I believe that you boys do really think of some good things once in a while.

TOM. Sure, we think of good things all the time. Don't we, George?

GEORGE. You bet we do.

KATE. All right then, Lois, let's take just half of what we have to Aunt Jane and let Tom and George give the others to the little boys.

LOIS. Let's do. [GIRLS *take half of each sack and change to other, then give one sack to boys.*]

KATE. Now, we'd better be going, I suppose. [GIRLS *start off right.*]

TOM. Oh, girls! wait a minute. You forgot to ask us who the little boys are, didn't you?

KATE. Yes, we did. Well, who are they?

TOM. One's named Tom. [*Runs off at left.*]

GEORGE. The other one's named George. [*Runs off after* TOM.]

KATE [*acting surprised*]. Well, what do you know about that?

LOIS. And they both acted so serious, too.

KATE. Oh, well, let them go it. If they want to act like young heathens, we can't help it. [*Exeunt* GIRLS *at right.*]

Enter MRS. ALLEN *from center.*

MRS. ALLEN. Now, where did those two boys go, I wonder? They're always on hand when I don't want them and

gone when I do. I need some more wood to finish my baking.

[BOYS *are heard outside at left.* MRS. ALLEN *listens.*]

TOM. We worked 'em slick, didn't we?

GEORGE. I'll say we did. Why, Christmas has already begun for us. Want another cookie?

TOM. Yeah, boy. These taste just right to me.

MRS. ALLEN. So they've been into my cookies. I'll listen and see what I can find out. [*Draws aside as* BOYS *enter.*]

GEORGE. Now, we mustn't let mother find out about this, or it might not go so well with us.

TOM. Why, of course not. We'll ask her for some more cookies directly.

GEORGE. I'll say we will. We'll make our Christmas a merry one.

MRS. ALLEN [*advancing*]. Boys. [BOYS *jump.* GEORGE *puts sack behind him.*] I need some more wood right now. Run and bring it in. Then I have something to tell you.

BOTH. A-w-w-w.

MRS. ALLEN. All right then. I'll go myself. I guess you don't like turkey. [*Starts off at left.*]

TOM. Oh, yes, mother, we do, too!

GEORGE. We'll get the wood. [*Both go off at left.*]

MRS. ALLEN. Now, I must try to find out how they got those cookies, when I've been right in the kitchen where I put them all of the time. Here come the girls. Maybe they can help to explain.

[*Enter* KATE *and* LOIS *at right*]

MRS. ALLEN. Why, girls, you haven't been to Aunt Jane's and back already, have you?

LOIS. No. We didn't go.

MRS. ALLEN. Didn't go! Why not?

KATE. Well, mother, we started, but Tom and George played a trick on us and got half of our cookies, and we decided that what we had left was not enough, so we came back.

MRS. ALLEN. Tom and George played a trick on you? What kind of a trick did they play?

LOIS. Oh, they told us that they knew two little boys who were mighty hungry for cookies, so we gave them half of what we had before we found out that they were the little boys themselves.

MRS. ALLEN. Well, well, girls, you were mighty easy to trick. But what did you do with the rest of the cookies?

LOIS. We a-a-ate them.

MRS. ALLEN. So that's how *you* do, after leaving all of the dishes for me to wash, besides all of my other work! I wanted you to go, as I thought you were so anxious to show a spirit of thankfulness for what Aunt Jane had done for you; but now I don't know what to think.

KATE. But, mother, the boys were the cause of all of it.

MRS. ALLEN. I know that the boys did wrong and I mean to talk to them later. But you girls have done wrong, too, by eating what was meant for another; for that was selfishness and selfishness never goes with the Christmas spirit.

KATE. We did wrong, mother, or at least I did, for I am older than Lois and I led her into what she did.

LOIS. No, she didn't, mother. I didn't have to eat them unless I wanted to. I'm as much to blame as Kate.

KATE. We can do without our part of the turkey, mother, and take it over to Aunt Jane.

LOIS. Yes, that's what we'll do.

MRS. ALLEN. No, no, girls, you won't need to do that. I

have plenty of turkey for all of us, Aunt Jane included. I'm mighty glad to see, though, that you really have the Christmas spirit at last. Here come the boys. Let's step back and see what they are having to say to each other.

[MRS. ALLEN *and* GIRLS *draw aside as* BOYS *enter at left*]

TOM. You know I don't feel just right about those cookies, since I've thought about how nice Aunt Jane has always been to us.

GEORGE. I don't either, Tom. I believe I'll tell mother all about it and ask her to give us more cookies to take to Aunt Jane yet.

TOM. No. Listen— I'll tell you what we can do. We can take our wood on into the kitchen, then go over to Aunt Jane's and cut some wood for her. Maybe she could cook something herself, if she had plenty of wood.

GEORGE. Why, sure. We could cut the wood, build the fire, and move her chair into the kitchen. Then I'm sure she could do the rest. After we come back, we can tell mother all about it. Maybe she won't scold us much.

MRS. ALLEN [*appearing*]. I won't scold you at all, boys, after such fine manliness as you have just shown. Take your wood on into the kitchen, then you may go over to Aunt Jane's and bring her over here for Christmas dinner. Girls, go with them. At last I think all four of you have caught the real spirit that I'd like to see you keep.

TOM, GEORGE, LOIS and KATE. I'll say we have. [*All rush out and as curtain falls* BOYS *are heard to throw their coats down heavily on floor off stage.*]

CURTAIN

THE TALE THE FIRE TOLD

NOEL FLAURIER

CHARACTERS

STORY-TELLER, *a girl of about twelve*
A GROUP OF SMALL CHILDREN, *any desired number*
THE VIRGIN MARY
THE THREE WISE MEN
THE STAR-BEARER

THE STORY-TELLER *is sitting before an improvised fireplace, with the smaller children on lower seats or on the floor. If possible, simulate coals by the use of red bulbs fed by a battery. The fireplace is to the right of the stage. At the left in the shadows is the manger, resting on a bed of straw, with* THE VIRGIN MARY *sitting beside it.*

STORY-TELLER.

Christmas night, with stars so clear—
All white and twinkling cold.
Here by my warm fireside I sit,
And tell The Story old.

The fire has burned to coals of red,
Their glow I do not see;
There pass before my eyes the fields
Of far-off Bethany.

In place of coals I see The Star,
As bright as those tonight:
A beckoning hand that went before,
To guide the Wise Men right.

[*While this stanza is being spoken,* A CHILD *appears from right, robed in white and bearing a large silver star held high on the end of a staff.*]

I see the robes the Wise Men wore,
As through the night they came;
Rich colors of the Orient,
All gorgeous in their train.

[THREE WISE MEN *wearing bright robes slowly appear from right, following* STAR-BEARER.]

As on they came, they bowed their heads,
The Heavens softly rang,
As sweetly, on that Christmas Eve
In humble tones they sang:

[WISE MEN *sing* WE THREE KINGS OF THE ORIENT ARE, *as they advance to manger.*]

Beside the lowly manger there
The WISE MEN bowed them low,
And from their lips rich words of praise
In reverence did flow.

[WISE MEN *kneel in group;* STAR-BEARER *holds star above their heads.*]

All this my fireside tells to me
This wintry, ice-bound night,
All this shines in these burning coals
That glow with rosy light.

The story of the Holy Birth,
Unchanged and ever new,
The fire will always tell, just as
It's told this tale to you.

[STORY-TELLER *and group of children sing* HOLY NIGHT, SILENT NIGHT, *or any Christmas song desired.*]

CURTAIN

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

SCENE

The stage is set to represent a room with a large fireplace at center, rear. This may be made from a big box and should be large enough to permit Santa Claus to step through. There is a couch to right of the fireplace. It is covered with a bright cover and there are gay pillows on it. Before the fireplace is a rug and at the right an easy chair. At the left front of the stage is a low table with cover. At the right front is a chair.

TIME

Evening of the day before Christmas.

CHARACTERS

DICKY
DOLLY
MOTHER
DADDY
SANTA CLAUS
THE CHRISTMAS HOLLY ELF

COSTUMES

Dicky, a little boy in dressing-gown and felt slippers.

Dolly, a little girl in a bath-wrapper and bedroom slippers.

Santa Claus, in regulation dress of red, with a large pack on his back and a long white beard about his chin.

The Christmas Elf, a little boy dressed in a tight green dress, wearing a scarlet cap and scarlet boots. In his hat is stuck a sprig of holly with red berries.

Mother and Daddy, both in dressing gowns with felt slippers. Mother wears her hair in a long braid down her back and carries a flashlight. Daddy carries a toy pistol.

Costumes of other characters are just what anybody might wear at bedtime on Christmas Eve.

The curtain rises to disclose DOLLY *with a small stocking in her hand, advancing from right toward the chimney piece.* DICKEY, *holding an enormous red cotton stocking, large enough to fit a giant, coming from left. They meet at center, in front of the fireplace.*

DICKY [*holding up his stocking*]. How's this for size?

DOLLY. Where'd you get it? I don't think it's fair!

DICKY [*trying to hang up the long stocking, but it falls down on the rug*]. I made it myself [*proudly*] and its big enough to hold all Santa Claus's whole pack. Think of the lovely things I'll get. More'n anybody else!

DOLLY. I think it's no fair to ask for more'n your share! That stocking looks just "piggy," so it does! You ought to hang up your *own* stocking!

DICKY. It isn't piggy. You could get more, too, if you'd make yourself a big stocking.

DOLLY [*hanging up her stocking*]. I don't want to. I'd be ashamed to hang up a great big, piggy stocking like that! I don't believe that Mother or Daddy'd approve. You'd better ask them about it and whether you can hang it up. [*Peeping into the fireplace.*] Oh, yes, he can get through *that*. I'm sure.

DICKY [*finally fastening his stocking up successfully*]. Well, mine stays here. Of course, Mother and Daddy haven't seen it. Why should they? And besides, they've gone to sleep, I am sure. I suppose they thought we hung up our stockings hours ago, but I was making mine and I couldn't get it done earlier.

DOLLY. And I was finishing Christmas presents and forgot to do it before. I was making this. [*She holds up a package labeled*: "To Santa Claus, with Dolly's love. Merry Christmas!"]

DICKY [*coming over to where Dolly stands beside the table*]. What is it, a present for Santa Claus?

DOLLY [*laughing*]. Yes. Do you suppose he'll like it? You can't guess what it is.

DICKY [*poking the parcel*]. Bed socks?

DOLLY [*letting him feel of the parcel*]. Guess again!

DICKY [*feeling of it.*] A pink sachet! [*Smells of it with a sniff.*] No. 'Tisn't that, because it doesn't smell of violets or anything. It's candy, maybe?

DOLLY [*dancing up and down*]. No! No! It's a pair of red mittens. I knit them *myself!* What would Santa Claus want with candy? He has tons of it. And I don't think he'd *ever* care for a sachet. It's mittens!

DICKY. Well, I'm not going to give him any present.

DOLLY. I can put "From Dicky" on it, too.

DICKY. Yes—give it here. I'll write it. [*Writes on parcel.*] Now, where'll you put it, so he'll see it? Put it beside my big red stocking.

DOLLY [*crossing to fireplace*]. No! No! He'd be sure to see it on the table, I think. [*Goes back to the table and lays it there, trying various places.*]

DICKY. What were you doing out there in the dining room? I thought I heard you there. Find anything to eat?

DOLLY. I was fixing up a tray for Santa Claus. I think he must be hungry after a ride on a cold night like this. I must go get it.

[*Exit* DOLLY, *right.*]

DICKY. He'll never see it there. It would be better near my big stocking! If he thinks I gave him so much, he'll want to leave me pretty nice presents, too! [*He moves the stocking and lays it beside his big one, which drops upon the floor full length.*]

[*Reënter* DOLLY, *right, carrying a tray on which are some sandwiches and a piece of cake, with a glass of milk.*]

DOLLY. I think he'll like this. [*Puts the tray down on the table and sees that the parcel is not there.*]

DICKY. Oh, let me have a sandwich! Just one!

DOLLY. No! No! You bad boy! Put the parcel back where I left it. You can't have any of the sandwiches. There are only four anyway, and Santa Claus will be hungry! Go 'way!

DICKY. Just one cake. I'm so hungry!

DOLLY [*protecting the cake*]. No! No! No!

DICKY [*grabbing, unsuccessfully*]. He wouldn't miss it.

DOLLY [*looking at the tray and rearranging it*]. Now come, for it's late, Dicky. We oughtn't to stay any longer. It's most twelve. He may come any minute! [*Starts to go.*]

DICKY. I'm going to stay. I can hide under the table so he'll never see me! [*He hides under the table, but his red felt slipper shows under the cloth.*] I shall stay here. I'm all hidden.

DOLLY [*pulling his slipper off*]. No, you aren't. Your slipper sticks out! It isn't right to stay, and he won't like it if he finds you.

DICKY. I don't care!

DOLLY. Besides, if I leave you here, you'll be sure to eat the sandwiches and nibble the cake. [*She carries his slipper with her, left, toward the couch.*] I shan't give you your slipper till you come out from under the table!

DICKY [*crawling out from under the table on all fours, reluctantly, and rather angry*]. Give it here! I want it. My feet are cold! Besides, I might step on a tack! [*He takes the slipper and puts it on.*] I could curl up on the couch and pretend to be asleep. [*He jumps on the couch and curls up, snoring audibly.*] How's that? Doesn't it sound as if I were asleep? [*Snores.*]

DOLLY. No, it doesn't—not a bit! Come! [*She tries to pull him off the couch.*] He won't like it, if he finds you!

[*Sleigh bells jingle off scene.*]

DOLLY. Hark! I heard sleigh bells! Come, Dicky! Come!

DICKY. Let me be. I'm asleep! I want to see him! Go away.

[*Sleigh bells again jingle, louder.*]

DOLLY. Oh Dicky—please!

DICKY. There now! Hide, quick. He's coming! [*He throws the couch rug over the two of them and holds* DOLLY.] Quiet!

[*Enter* SANTA CLAUS *from the chimney. He stops on the rug and dusts his feet off.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Musn't get any tacks on the rug! Awfully tight chimney! [*Lays down his pack upon the rug and looks around.*] That's some stocking! Must be a giant's child in this house. Dear me! [*Thoughtfully.*] I thought Dicky and Dolly Jones lived here. [*Looking again.*] One stocking looks like Dolly's that I filled last year. Dicky's trying to fool me! [*He scratches his head thoughtfully.*] It's Dicky's doing. Don't know any giant child here.

DICKY [*snores loudly and regularly*].

SANTA CLAUS. Children here? Well, it's all right if they're asleep. [*In a whisper.*] I must be very, very quiet! [*Turns to the big stocking.*] Why, if I filled a stocking like this, there'd be nothing left for anybody else—nothing for the poor children, the little orphans, the children that don't get any gifts when things run short. Some children get too much! [*Pulls down the big stocking.*] I don't know what to do about it. [*Puts it in place again.*] It might belong to somebody that was oversize, perhaps.

DICKY [*giggles from the couch*].

DOLLY. Hush!

SANTA CLAUS [*crossing to the couch and pulling off the covers*]. There! I thought that snoring wasn't real. Well, so long as you're here, you can explain why you stayed and hid.

DICKY. We were hanging up our stockings—and——

DOLLY. I didn't want to stay. I was afraid you'd be put out about our seeing you.

SANTA CLAUS. I am! I am! [*Stalking up and down the stage.*] I am! I am! You ought to be abed and asleep —and no peeking!

DOLLY. I know—I know. But please forgive us; I was up late tying up Christmas gifts and forgot all about my stocking, and when I came down, Dicky was here and we were fooling——

DICKY. And we hid when we heard the sleigh bells. That was how it happened. I'm sure we couldn't be to blame! Let's see what you have brought us! [*Goes to the* SANTA CLAUS *pack and is about to open it.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Hie there! If you don't leave that alone, I've a mind not to leave you anything. I have a mind to go back up the chimney. Why didn't you go to bed the way you ought to? [*Crossly.*] I'm quite put out! [*Going into the chimney.*]

DICKY *and* DOLLY. Oh, please don't go! Please don't!

DOLLY. You see, Mr. Santa Claus, it was really my fault. I—I fixed you up a lunch. You haven't found it!

SANTA CLAUS [*coming out of the chimney*]. Hey, what's that, Dolly?

DOLLY. Oh, I'm glad you came back. You see, I fixed you up a nice little lunch. It's here [*running to the table.*] See! Just sit down in this big chair and eat it. And you don't need to leave me any games or toys or anything, if there aren't enough to go around to the little poor children and the orphans, and those that usually get very little.

SANTA CLAUS [*seating himself in the chair and eating*]. How thoughtful of you, Dolly! Thank you, Dolly! That was kind of you!

DOLLY. I have everything that you brought me last year—the doll, the tea set, the books, the games; and though I've played with them, they're still just as good as new.

DICKY [*pushing in between* SANTA CLAUS *and* DOLLY]. Did you bring me all the things I asked for in my letter?

SANTA CLAUS. Oh, I see! That stocking must be yours, Dicky?

DICKY. Yes, it's mine. I could have made it bigger.

SANTA CLAUS [*with a chuckle, eating the cake*]. What long legs you must have, Dicky!

DICKY [*looking at his feet*]. Not at all! [*Crossly.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Do you think that stocking's quite—quite your size?

DICKY. Oh, I didn't suppose it mattered. I asked for so many things! If I'd put up my own stocking, there might have been holes in it. I wear them very hard. Mother says so! Please, what did you decide to give me? May I see?

DOLLY [*reprovingly*]. Let him eat his cake. [*To* SANTA CLAUS]. Dicky always wants more'n his share!

DICKY. No, I don't. No! No!

SANTA CLAUS [*finishing up the crumbs*]. Awfully good! I feel as if I'd had a dinner! You know Dicky isn't the *only* child who has asked for more than his share; maybe he didn't know what it meant.

DICKY [*poking the* SANTA CLAUS *pack*]. Oh, do let me see! [*Peeps in.*]

DOLLY. You musn't! Put it down!

SANTA CLAUS [*to* DOLLY]. Oh—a present for me! [*Picking up the gift that is on the table.*] How wonderful! [*He takes out the mittens and tries them on.*]

DOLLY. You like them?

SANTA CLAUS. They just fit! Thank you! Thank you!

DICKY. It was part mine, too!

SANTA CLAUS. I suppose you each knit one.

DICKY. Well—not exactly. Dolly did them, but we gave them together. She let me have half!

SANTA CLAUS. I see! Well, I'm much obliged, Dicky.

DICKY [*in off-hand manner*]. Oh, that's all right. But, see here, let me have my things, won't you? [*Looking into the sack.*] There's the radio set I wanted, and the toy aeroplane, and the skates. I can see them. And the pogo stick and the—oh, yes, the baseball mask. And those must be my candies! [*Putting his hand into the bag as if to pull them out.*] Oh!

SANTA CLAUS. Wait a bit!

DICKY [*dancing up and down*]. I say, Dolly, see all I've got! Oh, I've got all there is in the Santa Claus pack!

SANTA CLAUS [*taking down the big stocking and putting in its place the whole pack*]. I suppose I might as well—you asked for about all.

DICKY. Oh, the whole pack! How dandy! [*He is overjoyed.*]

DOLLY [*reprovingly*]. Oh, Dicky!

SANTA CLAUS. Never mind, Dolly. Let him take out what he finds in the pack.

DICKY. Oh, Oh, Oh! Look! I'll pull out this—a great, big, enormous package! [*He pulls out with effort a big parcel which almost fills the sack.*] Oh! Oh! Oh! Look! [*He pulls the package out and finds it labeled* "Greediness."] Oh! [*Taken aback*] Oh!

SANTA CLAUS. That's what you asked for, you know. You've got it!

DICKY. But I didn't want that! [*Beginning to cry.*] I didn't want that! Don't I get anything else?

SANTA CLAUS. I can't do anything else about it. That's what all selfish children get.

DICKY. But I wanted the other things. *All* of them.

SANTA CLAUS. But, since you were over-greedy, you got selfishness.

DICKY [*crying*]. I don't want it! I don't like it!

DOLLY. Nor I!

SANTA CLAUS. But, Dolly, you're not greedy!

DICKY. I don't care! I'm going back to bed! I'm not going to open it. [*Starts, but turns back.*] I didn't know you could be mean! [*To* SANTA CLAUS.]

DOLLY. Oh, hush!

SANTA CLAUS. Dicky, I'm sorry. You see, as soon as you looked into that pack, you changed all the toys that were in it. I'm not responsible that you pulled out a big package of greediness instead of a toy; if Dolly had tried, it would have been different. We'll see what we can do. I'll have to call my Christmas Elf to consult about it. He's up on top of the roof. [*Goes to chimney and calls.*] Christmas Elf, come! Come here! Want your help!

[*There is a jingle of bells and a little* CHRISTMAS ELF *peeps out from the chimney. There are bells sewed all over his elfin dress of red and green.*]

[*Enter* CHRISTMAS ELF, *from chimney.*]

CHRISTMAS ELF. I'm here!

SANTA CLAUS. There's a little boy here who has asked for all that was in my whole pack; so I gave him the whole of the pack, you see, and he is crying because when he started to take out the presents, he found nothing but *greediness!*

CHRISTMAS ELF. Exactly!

DICKY. I didn't know I was so selfish!

DOLLY [*putting an arm about him*]. Don't cry. It's going to be made all right, I'm sure.

CHRISTMAS ELF. We'll try what can be done. [*Puts the package into the pack again.*] Now, little boy, pick it out again!

DICKY [*crying*]. I don't want to be selfish. I hate that big, selfish red stocking! I don't care whether I have *any* presents. I want the poor little children who haven't much to enjoy—I want them to have my share——

CHRISTMAS ELF. Oh, that's the Christmas spirit! Now, I'm sure things will look better! [*To* DICKY.] Now, see what you pull out. [*Holding the pack open.*]

DICKY. Oh! It's another big package! [*This time the other side of the big package is turned toward the audience and it reads* "Unselfishness."]

SANTA CLAUS [*patting* DICKY *on the back.*] There! Now, you see things are quite right. If you hadn't felt like that, the Christmas Fairy couldn't have worked such true magic!

DICKY. And there's a letter.

DOLLY. Let's read it.

DICKY [*breaking open the letter and reading.*] Dear Dicky: I am giving you the very biggest thing Christmas can bring. It is the chance to think of others and help those who need your thought and help and kindness. You can make many people happy by unselfishness and good will. This is the real Christmas gift. It is better than having many toys and many little gifts that you can break. I invite you and Dolly to go with me and distribute the big gift tonight.—Santa Claus.

DOLLY. May I? Oh, may I? I know some little poor children I'd like to take dolls to. And there are the poor little Smiths who aren't going to have any Christmas—no gifts at all!

DICKY. I will take my radio set to Billy Brown; his mother is too poor to buy him one.

DOLLY. To go in the Santa Claus sleigh! Oh, what fun! [*Suddenly thinking.*] You think Mother'd let us go? We'll have to ask.

DICKY. Oh, Oh! Let's see. I'll make out a list. [*Writes with paper and pencil.*] I think it'll be such fun giving things away with Santa Claus. I shall find all the poor children. I won't give to any who are greedy.

[*A door slams off stage*]

DOLLY. Oh, we must have wakened Daddy!

SANTA CLAUS. Oh, well, I must go. Don't dare to get caught again.

[*The* CHRISTMAS ELF *is about to precede* SANTA *into the chimney when the door opens and in comes* DADDY, *followed by* MOTHER.]

DADDY [*surprised*]. Oh! [*Dropping the toy revolver he holds.*] Oh, excuse me! I thought it might be a burglar! [*Laughs.*] So it was you!

MOTHER. So good of you to come and remember the children, Santa Claus!

SANTA CLAUS [*laughing*]. They were very naughty. They hid and saw me when I came and I showed Dicky here some things.

DOLLY. And Santa Claus has asked us to go with him and help give out the Christmas gifts. [*To her* MOTHER *in a whisper.*] He's wearing my red mittens—see! [*To* DADDY.] You'll let us go? Oh, please!

DADDY. Oh, yes, to be sure! Don't forget to hold on tight, though!

MOTHER. Run and get your coats.

SANTA CLAUS. There are plenty of furs and warm things up on the roof, Mother. Don't worry! [To children.] Merry Christmas, children. Hurry! We have to make up for lost time.

DOLLY. We'll be home in time for early breakfast.

DICKY. See what I'll bring *you both!*

SANTA CLAUS [*standing beside the fireplace*]. Children and Elf first! [*To parents.*] Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Oh, I'll take care of the children! Merry Christmas!

MOTHER. Have a nice time!

DADDY. Yes! Have a good time!

DICKY [*turning and laughing*]. The best time in all the world! [*Calling back.*] Mother, please hide that horrid, old, selfish, red stocking!

MOTHER. I will. [*Laughing.*]

DADDY. Yes! It is better to give than to receive!

[SANTA CLAUS *turns to go up the chimney.*]

ALL [*in chorus*]. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

CURTAIN

If desired the play may be ended with a tableau or with a suitable recitation as the following:

Christmas Everywhere

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight!
Christmas in lands of the fir-tree and pine,
Christmas in lands of the palm-tree and vine,
Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright!

Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,
Christmas where old men are patient and gray,
Christmas where peace, like a dove in his flight,
Broods o'er brave men in the thick of the fight;
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight!

For the Christ-Child who comes is the Master of all;
No palace too great and no cottage too small.

Phillips Brooks

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

PATTEN BEARD

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

SANTA CLAUS, with bright red suit and long white beard.
MRS. SANTA CLAUS in red dress with white apron.
THE HOLLY ELVES, in green suits with red trimmings and bright red caps into which holly sprigs are thrust.

SCENE

Santa Claus' Workshop.—To right is a large desk covered with letters and long Christmas lists. To center rear is a pile of wrapped Christmas gifts and a Christmas tree, unlighted. To left are big covered baskets showing toys sticking out from their coverings. Letters and envelopes lie scattered about Santa Claus' desk.

The curtain rises showing SANTA CLAUS *seated at the desk, busy with Christmas letters,* MRS. SANTA CLAUS *bending over him.*

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Oh, please come and have your supper, dear!

SANTA CLAUS. Supper! Why, look at all these Christmas lists that have come in at the last moment!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Oh bother! Come and have your supper! You'll be able to work twice as well and twice as fast after!

SANTA CLAUS. No! No! I can't stop! Think of it—if any children who had counted on me should really find nothing in their stockings Christmas morning! Oh, I'm very, very, very busy, my dear! Don't ask me to stop yet.

[*There is a rap on the door outside.*]

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*turning*]. Come in!

[*Enter a* HOLLY ELF *with mail-bag.*]

HOLLY ELF [*bowing low*]. Some more mail, just arrived by Chimney-Place Route, Sir!

SANTA CLAUS [*distractedly*]. More mail! Well, well, well —more mail! Mercy me! Put it there. [*Pointing.*] I'll see to it as soon as I can.

[*Another rap on the door outside.*]

HOLLY ELF. Shall I answer it? I think it's another batch of Christmas lists that have come by the Mail-Box Route. [*He answers the door.*]

[*Enter another* HOLLY ELF *with mail bag slung over his shoulder.*]

SECOND ELF. Mail by the Post-Box Route, Mr. Santa Claus.

SANTA CLAUS. Thank you—yes! Put it there [*pointing*] beside the other sack and call my stenographer, please.

[*The* HOLLY ELVES *empty their sacks on the floor near* SANTA CLAUS' *desk and exeunt.*]

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. The stenographer is just hurrying through supper. Can't I help? Let me help!

SANTA CLAUS. Well, all right! Just go over those new letters for me—there's a dear! And put the lists on file so that the Holly Elves can fill them.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*seating herself in a large rocker, opens envelopes and places one list after another on a long bill file*]. These children are asking for such a lot of things! They want everything from radio outfits to automobiles and aeroplanes.

SANTA CLAUS. Yes, the children are asking for all sorts of things—they always do! I'm sure I don't know how we're coming out! [*Holding out a package of lists to* MRS. SANTA CLAUS]. There, these can be filled out.

You might call the Holly Elves and have them pack up the presents and label them. [*He turns back to work over the file* MRS. SANTA CLAUS *has placed on his desk.*]

MRS. SANTA [*goes to table and rings a little bell that is there*].

SANTA CLAUS. No! No! They're out in the Christmas Tree Grove. They won't hear that.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*going to the door and ringing the bell very loudly*]. That's all right! I'm sure they'll hear that! [*Goes back to her lists and tosses the envelopes into piles, sorting rapidly.*]

[*Enter* HOLLY ELVES, *running. One has an armful of dolls; another has an armful of games and toys, another an armful of wrapped presents, another is dragging three sleds; another carries a basket.*]

SANTA CLAUS [*jumping up*]. Well, well! Now let's see! How are things going down in the Christmas Tree Grove?

FIRST HOLLY ELF. Oh, we're getting on beautifully! Almost all the presents are picked.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. I just brought these dolls in because they are the very last.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. And these are the last games and toys from the plaything trees.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And these books and candies that are in the basket——

SANTA CLAUS [*excitedly*]. And all these letters and all these lists still to fill! Whatever am I going to do? Whatever are *we* going to do? [*Walking back and forth excitedly.*] All those children asking for things —and not finding them on Christmas morning! They'll be so disappointed! And they'll never believe in me

any more! Didn't we grow more presents in the Christmas-tree grove this year than ever before?

FIRST HOLLY ELF. There was an unusually large crop.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. And dolls were very plentiful—larger and lovelier than ever—French dolls, foreign dolls, character dolls, dolls of every sort! Even the little dolls were most abundant.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. And as for the games and the toys, sir, they were unusually plentiful. And very few fell from the trees and got broken.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And the skates and sleds grew splendidly, as well as all the other out-of-door playthings. The pogo sticks came up beautifully as our new venture. But they, too, have all been gathered.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. And the books were even better than ever. And all the candy bushes bore fine crops of Christmas candies.

SANTA CLAUS. Then I really can't understand it.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*picking up a list off* SANTA CLAUS' *desk*]. But I think I understand it. I think the real trouble is that the children have been asking for too much.

SANTA CLAUS [*stopping short and looking at the lists on the desk*]. Well, my dear, maybe you are right.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. You see, you've filled all the lists just as they came in. Look over there at that big wash basket. Now, all of those toys are labeled to go to one child!

SANTA CLAUS. I know it. They're going to Johnnie, John Elmore McKrae's little son. Didn't he ask for them?

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. But it seems to me he might share with somebody else.

SANTA CLAUS. Well, he did ask for a great many things. The whole list isn't there. Some of his things are outside being packed into the sleigh, I remember.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*looking at the other big baskets standing about*]. And here—look here! These are all for Tibbit and Tottie Harrison, those rich little children who live in that big house in that millionaire suburb.

SANTA CLAUS. I know it! And I love Tibbit and Tottie! They believe in me!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*picking up a letter*]. Now, my dear, just look at this and you'll see what I mean. [*She hands* SANTA CLAUS *a letter.*]

[*The* HOLLY ELVES *draw close to* SANTA CLAUS *as he takes it up.*]

FIRST HOLLY ELF. What does it say?

SANTA CLAUS. I'll read it.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Yes, you read it!

SANTA CLAUS [*reading*]. "Dear Mr. Santa Claus: Don't you know anything about us, I wonder? There are eight of us in our family and we live at number 1313 Smith Street. There's a lot of other children in the same tenement, but you never yet came down our chimney to bring any Christmas presents. I don't care so much about myself, because I can do without. But I wish you'd bring our baby a Teddy bear. And if there weren't toys enough to go 'round, you might bring just a little Christmas candy for us to divide." [*He takes out his pocket handkerchief and stops short.*] No! No! I'm not going to cry! I'm not! To think that I've gone and passed by the very children that really needed me!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*wiping her eyes*]. And, you see, there are other letters just like that. I found ever so many and some from very needy little children, who hadn't

warm clothes to wear! All that pile there—— [*She points to a stack of letters lying on the desk.*]

SANTA CLAUS. All I've got to say about it is that those little poor children have got to be remembered!

FIRST HOLLY ELF. They ought to be!

SECOND HOLLY ELF. Of course, they ought to be.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. They really need presents and play-things much more than the rest.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And we ought to go right over all the things and rearrange the lists.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. Let's see! Where shall we begin?

SANTA CLAUS. Dear! Dear! Dear! Then I shall have to disappoint some children in order to remember the others.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. But when some get so much more than others—and the little poor children need so much more than the rich children—

SANTA CLAUS. Yes! Yes! I know! I know! I know—— Those dear little children who need Christmas shall have it! They certainly shall! They certainly shall! —— And I'll go over all the lists—— I shall have to!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. At this late hour! Why, it's almost time for the reindeer to be at the door with the sleigh! [*Looking at the clock.*] It's almost seven o'clock, dear, and you haven't had even a bite of supper!

SANTA CLAUS [*taking up one letter after another*]. Well, these are the ones I must make right, these One Hundred Needy Cases. I wonder how I ever overlooked them. I suppose it was because of the very long lists from the very wealthy little children. [*He begins to sort the Christmas gifts, taking them out of the big baskets.*]

FIRST HOLLY ELF [*crossing to him*]. May I help? You see, I have thought of a way of evening up things.

SANTA CLAUS. Oh, please do help! That's what you are

for, you know. And what a help you Holly Elves have always been to me!

First Holly Elf. I have thought of a plan.

Santa Claus [*eagerly*]. Yes, yes.

First Holly Elf. It might work.

Mrs. Santa Claus [*jumping up from her work of sorting Christmas lists*]. Quick! Tell us about it!

First Holly Elf. You see, there are so many little poor children——

Santa Claus. Yes, so many that I have never known them all.

First Holly Elf. And the other children should be taught to think of others beside themselves.

Mrs. Santa Claus. That really is the spirit of Christmas. They've only been thinking about what they themselves were to receive!

Second Holly Elf. Exactly!

Third Holly Elf. The rich children ask for so much that there is not enough to go around.

First Holly Elf. That's just it! And it's so much work for Santa Claus to fill out such long lists. I think we might just put all the presents into the sleigh and divide them all up evenly, going down every chimney to see if any children are there who might else be forgotten!

Santa Claus. A fine plan! It is the only way! And we'll visit the little children in the tenements first, so as to be sure they aren't forgotten!

Mrs. Santa Claus. If I were you, I'd ask the little rich children to be sure to ask some little poor children to their Christmas tree celebrations! Couldn't you send everybody a little happy dream, though, about that? Slip it under the children's pillows when you go down the chimney to fill the stockings!

Santa Claus [*laughing*]. Why, to be sure I can! To be

sure I can! [*To* Holly Elves.] Now, all of you run off and pick every single Christmas present that is left on the trees of the Christmas-tree Grove. Pile them all on my sleigh. This year we won't forget anybody —no, not anybody! And I dare say that it will be a very, very Merry Christmas for everybody.

Mrs. Santa Claus. For Christmas really is giving and sharing—not asking and getting!

First Holly Elf. For Christmas is jolly giving.

Santa Claus [*laughing*]. Oh, now I'm not worried any more! Here! [*To* Fourth Holly Elf.] See if the sleigh is ready. There's so much to do we ought to start just as soon as we can.

[*Exeunt* Holly Elves, *dancing about in a merry little dance on their way to the door.*]

Mrs. Santa Claus. I'll put your dinner on now. You really must have a bite before you go!

Santa Claus. Yes, yes! In a minute! Do you think that all the children will be happy this Christmas? I want them all to be happy.

Mrs. Santa Claus. I think they will; if it is better to give than to receive, the children who have much to share should have a very Happy Christmas.

Santa Claus. And the children who have little shall have the jolliest Christmas they ever knew. I must go and wrap up the little dreams to put under their pillows!

Mrs. Santa Claus. Here, let me help! [*She fills a basket with bright tinsel, Christmas candles, Christmas stars, sprigs of holly and mistletoe.*] [*To* Santa Claus.] There, that's ready! Nobody can resist those Christmas dreams. They are sure to give one thoughts of giving happiness to others!

[*Sleighbells are heard without.*]

Santa Claus. There, dear! There are the reindeers. I

must hurry! So much to do tonight! Such lots of little children to visit! [*Kissing her good-by.*] Really, the dinner can wait! And if I'm hungry, maybe I'll eat Christmas candy, if there's any left over! [*He chuckles.*]

[*The* HOLLY ELVES *come dancing in.*]

FIRST HOLLY ELF. The presents are all packed.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. The sleigh is waiting!

THIRD HOLLY ELF. We found ever so many more presents than we thought. They are all in the sleigh.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And nobody shall be forgotten.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. All the little children shall share the joy of Christmas!

SANTA CLAUS. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas to everybody!

[*The sleighbells jingle as the curtain descends on* SANTA CLAUS *and the* HOLLY ELVES, *laden with Christmas tree, baskets and presents, going to the door followed by* MRS. SANTA CLAUS.]

The play may be closed with chorus singing the following to the tune of "*The Old Oaken Bucket*":

How dear to our hearts is each fair Christmas present,
As, hung on the tree it rejoices our view;
Each gift so delightful, each greeting so pleasant—
The children unite in a harmony true.
Dear children from farm and from countryside's cottage,
From Wyoming, Illinois, Georgia and Maine;
From Vermont's cold forests and Florida's fountains,
From old New York City to Texas' plain.

Come, share in our presents,
Our dear Christmas presents,
Our fine Christmas presents
That hang on the tree.

CHRISTMAS AT ACORN LODGE

A playlet in two acts for small children.

ETHELLE MANNING HERMES

COSTUMES

ACORNS. Full bloomers of dark brown cambric, upper part lighter shade. Suit can be made all together. Stitch two shades of material together in straight pieces, the upper third light, the lower two-third dark. Shape bottom for bloomers, run elastic in legs and around under arms where two shades join. Gather and tie around neck. Cut slits for arms. Cap should be tight fitting, made of green cambric with wired stem.

NUTS. Full bloomer suit of brown cambric, gathered around ankles and neck, with slits cut for hands. Must be shaped like bloomers at the bottom to give freedom for the legs. Cap, tight fitting, brown, with stem.

MOTHER NATURE. Green, leafy, thin costume, covered with garlands of leaves.

AUTUMN LEAVES. Gray cheesecloth, rather long and full, hanging in strips from shoulders. Head wrapped in turban with long flowing ends.

BREEZES. Costumes much the same as North Wind's but shorter and in different colors.

WHIRLWINDS. Same as Breezes, but a light gray in color.

OWLS. Use an old suit of underwear. Cut gray crepe paper in long strips about four inches wide; cut each strip in fringe about an inch apart and nearly halfway across. Sew these to the undersuit, round and round, each strip overlapping the under one until the whole is covered.

Sew wing-shaped pieces of muslin over the shoulders and cover these the same way. Fasten there to arms and wrists with elastic straps.

The cap should be a tight-fitting hood with stiff, pointed beak protruding over the face, and with cape extending down over the shoulders so that the head looks like the body. Cut large eyes out of cardboard and glue in place.

WINTER AND SNOWFLAKES. White tarleton or cheesecloth gathered very full, bordered with cotton and glistening with artificial snow. Borax chips are very good for this purpose.

BUSHY SQUIRREL. Tight-fitting suit of brown or gray cam-

bric, made like a brownie costume, with feet and hands sewed in. Tight cap tied under the chin. Long, bushy tail sewed and wired to stand up over the back.

MR. TURKEY AND MRS. GOOSE. Costumes made the same as for Owls, with large, fan-shaped tails, Turkey's black and brown, with comb and wattles of red, Goose's all white, with long yellow stockings.

FATHER TIME. Long, flowing robe of gray or black. Long beard and staff.

SYNOPSIS

ACORNS, NUTS, MOTHER NATURE with the AUTUMN LEAVES, NORTH WIND with the CHILLY BREEZES and NAUGHTY WHIRLWINDS enter one group after another, each singing, dancing or speaking. Then follow the THREE WISE OLD OWLS who predict the approach of winter.

WINTER arrives with SNOWFLAKES dancing and singing. They sprinkle snow over the ground.

After they dance away, BUSHY SQUIRREL enters cautiously and carries away the ACORNS and NUTS, which he stores carefully away in the hole in the old oak tree.

MR. TURKEY struts across the stage and meets MRS. GOOSE. They decide it is best for them to disappear, as Thanksgiving is near at hand.

FATHER TIME enters in search of MOTHER NATURE. He visits with BUSHY SQUIRREL and then calls his herald, CHANTICLEER, to announce the Christmas party to be held at Bushy's home, Acorn Lodge, during the coming holidays.

ACT I—AT THE LODGE

Scene: Lawn with trees.

GROUP OF TINY CHILDREN [*dressed as* ACORNS, *sing and pantomime*].

Song

We are tiny Acorns,
Cunning as can be.
North Wind shook the leafy boughs,
And we tumbled off the tree.

Chorus

Acorns, Acorns, Acorns, here and there,
Acorns, Acorns, Acorns, everywhere.
Small ones, plump ones, green and brown,
From the tree came tumbling down.

We have danced and frolicked
All the livelong day.
Now we'll find a leafy bed
And there we'll gladly stay.

Chorus

Sleepy little acorns,
We will lie just so.
We won't care a tiny bit
If wintry winds do blow.

Chorus

Unless squirrels find us
And stick us in their pokes,
We will shed these funny suits
And soon be sturdy oaks.

ACORNS *curl up on ground at back of stage and go to sleep.*

GROUP OF SMALL BOYS [*enter dressed as* NUTS. *They recite the following with pantomime*].

Those cunning little acorns
Are not so cute as we.
Although we may be "nutty,"
We're sweet as we can be.

What are acorns good for?
That's what we'd like to know.
Who wants to wait for forty years,
Until they sturdy grow?

Now we are always welcome
In good society;
In salads fine we oft appear,
Dressed with propriety.

We're always found at parties,
In Christmas stockings, too;
We decorate the birthday cake—
That's more than they can do.

We're not selfish acorns—
You can surely see
Though folks may call us "nutty,"
We're happy as can be.

NUTS *also sit in groups at back of stage and go to sleep.*

Enter MOTHER NATURE *with* AUTUMN LEAVES.

MOTHER NATURE.

Hasten, my dear children,
Today we'll dance with glee,
Tripping gaily through the forest,
Whirling, whirling, merrily.

Our dance will soon be ended,
For North Wind is on his way;
Chilly Breezes, Naughty Whirlwinds
Will put an end to play.

Then we'll have to scatter
Or be content, you know,
To sleep all through the winter
Beneath a robe of snow.

[*Lively, sprightly dance.*]

Enter NORTH WIND, BREEZES, WHIRLWINDS.

[LEAVES *scatter in all directions,* ACORNS *and* NUTS *roll sleepily into groups.*]

NORTHWIND [*sings*].

Song

Ho-oo-oo—Ho-oo-oo—
A breath of the north we bring!
You'd better run for mittens and muffs.
Ho-oo-oo— How we can sting!

Ho-oo-oo—Ho-oo-oo—
We must not tarry long—
We've far to go before we rest.

ALL [*sing the* NORTH WIND'S *song*]. Ho-oo-oo—Ho-oo-oo—. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter THREE WISE OLD OWLS.

FIRST OWL.
I feel in my bones that winter is near.

SECOND OWL.
The North Wind's Song sounds bleak and drear.

THIRD OWL.
My feathers are sadly ruffled, I fear.

FIRST OWL.
My bones fairly ache from the way I shook.

SECOND OWL.
I fear a dreadful cold I took.

THIRD OWL.
My, how dreadful I must look!

FIRST OWL.
North Wind is rough, it seems to me.

SECOND OWL.
Yes, yes, to that I quite agree.

THIRD OWL.
I'll say he almost ruined me.

FIRST OWL.
The old wind sings a mournful tune.

SECOND OWL.
Clouds of snow obscure the moon.

THIRD OWL.
Then Christmas time is coming soon.

ALL.
We're wise old owls and this we know
When cold North Winds do start to blow,
Autumn leaves and flowers must go.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter JACK FROST *and the* SNOWFLAKES.

WINTER.
Merry, merry Winter,
In lovely robes of white,
Dancing through the woodland
In the frosty night.

SNOWFLAKES.
We are little Snowflakes,
Always light and fair;

With our Mistress Winter
We flutter everywhere.
Snowflakes, Snowflakes,
Whirling through the air.

JACK FROST.

I am Winter's partner—
I am always nigh.
I bite your toes and nip your nose,
Oh, my! how sly am I!
Better get your mittens
For, my, how sly am I!

ALL.

Jack Frost, Jack Frost,
None more sly than he.
He slips about so softly,
None can hear or see.
Jack Frost, Jack Frost,
Very sly is he.

NORTH WIND [*sings* WHAT DOES THE BLUSTERING NORTH WIND SAY? *or any other appropriate song*].

[*All exeunt and* BUSHY SQUIRREL *comes cautiously out of the hole in the tree.*]

BUSHY.

Jolly old Winter is really here;
Christmas day is very near.
I must hurry, that I see,
Or when it's cold I'll hungry be.

Acorns brown and nuts galore—
These I'll add to my winter's store.

Come with me, you morsel sweet,
You're just the kind I like to eat.

NUTS.

Why, of course, we'll go with you;
Our duty we are glad to do.

BUSHY.

You acorns, too, must come with me.
Christmas time is coming—see?

ACORNS.

Oh, Mr. Bushy, don't take us!
We'll surely make an awful fuss.

[*To each other.*]

Sturdy oaks we'd rather be,
Than make a meal for such as he.

BUSHY.

I'll add you to my winter's store
And return to gather more.

[*Exit through hole in tree, taking* NUTS *and* ACORNS.]

Enter MR. TURKEY *and* MRS. GOOSE *from opposite sides of stage.*

MR. TURKEY.

Good morning to you, Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.

It's Mr. Turkey, I do declare.

MR. TURKEY.

I'm delighted to see, Mrs. Goose,
You're looking plump and fair.

Won't you stroll with me, dear Mrs. Goose?

MRS. GOOSE.
Mr. Turkey, I must decline.

MR. TURKEY.
Oh, I'm so sorry, Mrs. Goose,
The morning's very fine.
I've just heard something, Mrs. Goose,
Which makes me worried quite.

MRS. GOOSE
Oh, Mr. Turkey!

MR. TURKEY.
Yes, Mrs. Goose,
I'm sure you'll agree I'm right.
Christmas is coming, Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.
Mr. Turkey, say not so.

MR. TURKEY.
Trying times for us, dear Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.
How well, how well I know.

MR. TURKEY.
Please come with me, dear Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.
What shall we do? Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

MR. TURKEY.

There's just one way, dear Mrs. Goose;
The two of us must disappear.
We'll fly away, dear Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.

I'm much too fat to fly. [*Tries hard to fly.*]

MR. TURKEY.

Just flap your wings, dear Mrs. Goose.

MRS. GOOSE.

Oh, dear, I'm going to die.
[MRS. GOOSE *faints.*]

MR. TURKEY.

What's happened now? Oh, Mrs. Goose,
You're much too much for me.
[*Shakes her.*]
Wake up, you silly little goose,
What can the matter be?
[*Leaves her in disgust.*]
I tried to help the fat old goose.
To save her foolish head,
But all my plans the silly goose
Has quite upset instead.

I'll not worry. What's the use?
'Twas good advice I gave.
Thanks be, I'm not a silly goose!
My own life I will save.
[*Flaps his wings and hops away.*]

[MRS. GOOSE *revives, struggles to her feet and looks around.*]

MRS. GOOSE.

Oh, what a shock—How like a man!
He knew I couldn't fly.
I saw myself right in the pan—
I thought I'd surely die.

And now I'm sick as I can be.
I'll starve and grow much thinner.
That's the only way that I can see
To escape that Christmas dinner.
[*Waddles off stage.*]

Enter FATHER TIME *falteringly, very old and frail and talking to himself.*

FATHER TIME.

Time, you're getting old and feeble
Your days are near an end.
Gay New Year soon will be here.
What will happen then?

Have your days on earth been useful?
Have you really done your best?
Have you treated each one kindly?
Just how have you stood the test?

Perhaps I have not always done
The very best I might.
I'll try to do one more kind act
And that may set things right.

BUSHY [*enters*].

Well, Father Time, how do you do?
Brace up a bit, old dear—
You're not as ancient as you look!
You've only lived a year.

FATHER TIME.

Bushy, you gay, young rascal,
Who gave you that saucy tongue?
I wish that you would tell me
How you always keep so young.

BUSHY.

Why, that's because I'm happy.
That's the secret of my youth!
I never harm a living soul—
If you must know the truth.

All the children love me—
That's why I'm always gay;
It makes them very happy
To see me frisk and play.

And let me tell you, Father Time,
That joy beyond all measure
And youth and happiness are gained,
When we give children pleasure.

FATHER TIME.

Bushy, my boy, you're wonderful!
The idea is simply great.
Hurry now, and help me,
Before it is too late.

BUSHY.

What can you mean, old Father Time,
Whatever can I do?

FATHER TIME.

Come sit beside me, Bushy,
I want to talk to you.
[BUSHY *sits down*]

You know you've set me thinking.
It strikes me you are right
About the little children.
And now with all my might

I'll try to make them happy—
I think a way I've found.
We'll give a Christmas party
For all the children 'round.

BUSHY.

Oh, Father Time, that's just the thing!
And listen, better still—
Let's give it for the crippled boy,
Poor little Crooked Bill.

FATHER TIME.

All right, Bushy, go ahead!
Invite all children, rich or poor,
To a Christmas party at Acorn Lodge
On Christmas eve. Be sure

I'll speak to Santa Claus myself
About these girls and boys;
We must bring crutches for Crooked Bill,
And candy, books and toys.

It *does* make a person happy—
I'm growing younger every minute!
It's great, making children happy.
I can hardly wait to begin it.

Well, good-by, Bushy, I'll run along.
There's a lot for me to do.
You tell the children and Crooked Bill.
Say, it was lucky that I saw you.
[*Rushes busily off stage.*]

BUSHY.

Now I'll decorate old Acorn Lodge
And Christmas stockings fill;
Every one will be so happy,
Especially poor little Bill. [*Exit*]

[CURTAIN]

ACT II—THE PARTY

Scene same as before with addition of Christmas Tree, which FATHER TIME *and* BUSHY *are busily decorating.*

FATHER TIME [*stepping back to admire tree*].

Well, Bushy, my boy, what do you think?
Do you say our work is done!
It all looks pretty fine to me—
This kind of work is fun.

BUSHY.

It surely must be nearly time
For our young guests to arrive.
I know they'll all be pretty glad
To think that they're alive!

I can hear their happy voices,
They're coming up the hill.
There's Mr. Money's little Jane
A-helping Crooked Bill.

CHILDREN [*rushing in*].
Good evening, Bushy!

BUSHY.
Good evening all!
Shake hands with Father Time.

FATHER TIME.
I'm glad you all could come tonight
We'll have a jolly time

So this is Bill, I've heard about.
And now my children dear,
What shall we do to pass the time
'Til Santa Claus gets here?

BILL.
Is this a really, truly party?
[FATHER TIME *nods assent.*]
Are you doin' it all for me?
Say, you're awful kind, Mister—
It makes me happy, Gee!

I never thought I'd have a party
And I've not been to a show.
My crooked legs aren't good for much
And ma's awful poor, you know.

JANE [*a small girl, very bashfully*].
I think, Dear Mister—Father Time—
Of course, I do not know—

But wouldn't it be rather nice
For us to have a show?

While waiting here for Santa,
We all might dance and sing.
I think 'twould be a lot of fun.
Why, sure that's just the thing.

[CHILDREN *entertain with recitations, songs and dances*].

At the end of their program SANTA CLAUS *rushes in all out of breath.*

SANTA.

Well, well, well, I'm finally here,
Though I see that I'm late.
I was afraid I'd never make it—
Had to keep another date.

Well, well, well! Just see the presents—
Enough for all the girls and boys.
Here are crutches fine for little Bill,
And lots of books and games and toys.

BILL.

A pair of crutches! Oh, Santa,
Say, you're good to think of me!
Won't my ma be just delighted
When I learn to walk? Oh, gee!

SANTA.

Stockings filled with nuts from Bushy,
Taken from his winter store.
Bushy, you unselfish rascal,
You'll have to get yourself some more.

BUSHY.

Oh, Santa Claus, that doesn't matter!
There really is no hurry.
There're lots more in the woods, you see,
So I've no cause to worry.

SANTA.

Well, now, that seems to be quite all,
So I'll be on my way.
I've many stops to make tonight,
So I must not delay.

CHILDREN.

Oh, Santa Claus, we thank you!
To be good we'll surely try.
We really hate to see you go,
But, if you must, good-by.

FATHER TIME.

Now, children, gather round me,
Come sit here by my knee.
There is a little story
That I would tell to thee.

[CHILDREN *seat themselves around* FATHER TIME.]

Once upon a time, not long ago,
There lived a cross old gent
Who was very sad and gloomy,
Because his life had all been spent

In thinking only of himself.
No time nor thought gave he
To pleasing those about him;
He was selfish as could be.

One day he met a little friend,
A person young and gay,
Who quickly showed the older one
The error of his way.

The good advice he gave his friend
I'll now repeat to you:
"If you would be quite happy,
Make others happy too."

True happiness is always found
In giving others pleasure.
Kind acts reap their own reward—
Reward beyond all measure.

Love one another, children,
With a true, unselfish love.
To teach us this the Christ Child
Came down from Heaven above.

Now, let us rest a moment;
We are tired of childish play.
Just close our eyes to worldly things
And listen, for they say

That oft when all is quiet
A vision of loveliest sights
Is seen by silent watchers,
On this Holiest of nights.

[*Play ends with tableau of the "Nativity."*]

PRINCESS ELAINE'S CHRISTMAS

ETHELLE MANNING HEIMES

CHARACTERS

PRINCESS ELAINE.....*Crippled by an accident*
THE QUEEN.....*Her mother*
THE KING.....*Her father*
MARIE.....*The maid*
BOY.....*Who plays violin*
CHILDREN.....*Who dance and sing*
LORD CHAMBERLAIN.....*A tall boy*
SPANISH DANCER.....*A dark girl*
SANTA CLAUS.....*In usual dress*
PRINCE CHARMING.....*In court dress*
JACK IN THE BOX.....*Child in Japanese costume to dance*
FRENCH DOLL.....
.....*Small child in fancy dress, in large box, dances*
RABBIT.....*Child in rabbit costume*
FRENCH MAID.....*Dancer*
SCOTCH, DUTCH, JAP, FRENCH, RUSSIAN AND CHINESE DANCERS

PROPERTIES

One interior will answer for all scenes. Couch for little Princess in foreground. Gifts for Christmas celebration include wooden shoes from Dutch dancers, Chinese parasols from Chinese, Japanese fans from Japs, etc. Box large enough to hold Prince Charming. Also boxes for French doll and for Jack-in-the-Box.

ACT I

PRINCESS ELAINE'S *room.* PRINCESS *is lying on couch by window.* MOTHER *reading to her.*

PRINCESS ELAINE. Mother mine, must I always just lie here on this couch and never be able to run and play

like other children? I feel perfectly well and strong and still Dr. Richmond just keeps me in this old cast. I'm getting tired of it all. The little Princes in the tower were not one bit more lonesome than I.

MOTHER. Elaine, my child, how can you talk like that? Do not Marie and I spend all our time trying to entertain you?

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, yes, Mother, I know it seems ungrateful of me to feel as I do, but I can't help it. You and Marie do your best, of that I am sure, but I am only a little girl and I would so love to have some one my own age to talk to once in a while.

MOTHER. But dear, you know there is not another child in the *whole palace.*

PRINCESS ELAINE. That's just it—not another child in the *whole palace;* and yet from this very window I can see dozens of boys and girls playing right out in the street and really enjoying themselves.

MOTHER. My child, those are only the caretaker's children, you couldn't—

PRINCESS ELAINE. Only the caretaker's children—but they can run and play and *talk to each other,* and have the best kind of times, while I, their own Princess, must lie here and watch them from a distance and envy them their freedom. If Father is so very powerful, why can't he make that old doctor let me get up?

MOTHER. Child, child, you don't realize what you are saying. Your father would gladly give his kingdom if it would save you even one day of unhappiness. But his power is only human, and the doctors are doing everything possible to cure your sad affliction. It takes years to mend little bodies after such an accident as you had. Elaine, you have been wonderfully patient and sweet through it all and now that the end of your suffering

is so near at hand, can you not be happy just a little longer? I know it is hard to wait, but you have been so brave, you don't want to give way now.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Mother, I wouldn't mind if I could just have a little change, some one else to talk too. I get so tired of looking at Marie that sometimes I could just scream when she comes near me. Come, Mother, please, look out here. See the children all are coming now. One of them has a violin—they are going to dance. Oh, how I wish I might join them! Listen! Sometimes I can even hear them sing. Mother, tell Thomas to call all those children in and let them dance and sing for me.

MOTHER. My dear, that would never do; they are only the caretaker's children. You are a Princess of the Royal Blood!

PRINCESS ELAINE. Then the Princess commands! Have them brought in.

MOTHER. But your father!

PRINCESS ELAINE. You just told me Father would give his kingdom to make me happy. Well! I won't ask anything like that, but I'm sure if Father knew how badly I want them to come, he would see that I got my wish. Please, please, Mother mine, explain it to him. There, that's a dear. Oh, won't this be fun!

MOTHER. Well, if you insist; but I must tell His Majesty it was none of my choosing. Indeed, I would never have thought of such a thing. [*Exit.*]

Enter MARIE, *the maid*

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, Marie, do hurry, please! I'm going to have company, real company, all my very own. None of your Lords and Ladies, but just some real live boys and girls. I must look my very best, so please get me my prettiest ribbons and fix my pillows up, just so.

And now I want you to help me to make these little strangers feel at home. Please turn me around so that I shall be able to see them all.

Enter QUEEN

MOTHER. Elaine, your father says you cannot ask *all* those children in at once, but he has sent for a few of them—some one who can play and some who can dance, so that you may pretend you are at the theater, and he himself will come in soon to tell you of a wonderful surprise he has in store for you.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, Mother, you are good to me, and it was naughty of me to be unhappy for even a minute; but I was so lonesome. I'm getting so excited, I can scarcely wait. They're coming now. I can hear their young voices, so different from all the old men and women who are always coming to see me. Why, even their footsteps sound different on the stairs. Do I look all right? Open the door, Marie, and bid them enter. And Mother, dear, please don't look so *grand*, or you will frighten them—and I do want them to feel right at home, so they will want to come again.

Enter CHILDREN

PRINCESS ELAINE. Please come in, boys and girls. I am Princess Elaine and this is my mother, the Queen. I am very glad to welcome you to my home, for I have been sick for a long time and have enjoyed your play from my window; but now I shall be delighted to become really acquainted with you. [*To the* BOY *with violin*]. You play, don't you?

BOY. Well, I fiddle a little for the boys and girls, but I never expected to play for your Royal Highness.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, don't mind me. I don't know how to play a bit and so I promise you I shall enjoy your

music. And you don't need to be afraid of Mother, she is not half so fierce as she looks. Please play and dance and sing, just as you were doing down there, and we will keep so quiet you won't even know we are here. Now do, please.

[CHILDREN *play, dance and sing. After appropriate program, enter the* KING]

KING. Well, daughter, are you happy again?

PRINCESS ELAINE. Father, aren't they wonderful!

KING. I'm glad you enjoy their nonsense and now you children would better run along before Her Highness becomes too excited and tired. Thomas has a little treat prepared for you on the lawn, and some other time you shall return for a longer visit.

PRINCESS ELAINE. I'm not one bit tired, I have enjoyed every minute and shall look forward to another visit real soon. Thank you so much for coming and I hope Thomas has something really nice ready for you. Good-by! Good-by!

[CHILDREN *bow and say "Good-by." Exeunt.*]

KING. Daughter, I have some news—some very wonderful news for you.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Yes, Father, tell me, please.

KING. You know it has been several years since we have had a celebration of any kind in this kingdom, first, because of the wars and then because all the nation was plunged so deep in sorrow on account of your accident. You don't realize what a great personage you are, you little minx—but when the only child of a powerful monarch is hovering between life and death, his loyal subjects are in no mood to rejoice; but now things are going to be different. Do you know what time of the year this is?

PRINCESS ELAINE. Surely—it is almost Christmas. The time when every other little girl and boy tells Santa Claus what they want him to put in their stockings. Oh, dear, it must be grand to have a stocking!

KING. That's it, that's it, exactly. Just what I came to tell you. Dr. Richmond has just informed me that the last examination made showed that your bones have knitted together perfectly, at last, and he thinks it will be safe to remove the casts.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, Father, Father! I'm so glad!

KING. And so I have sent out a proclamation commanding all to rejoice, and Christmas eve will be celebrated with feasting and song throughout the nation. I think you have had enough excitement now for one day. You mustn't overdo and upset all our plans, so quiet down now and rest a while, so that you will be able to enjoy a regular party. Good night, my child.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Good night, Father. I'm certainly going to be happy now. I must have Marie get me some stockings and maybe I can have some real slippers, too, for I am going to learn to walk and then, who knows, perhaps I, too, shall be able to dance.

ACT II

Court Scene

At one side of stage, behind screen or curtain, stands a Christmas tree surrounded by mysterious-looking boxes. PRINCESS ELAINE *is dressed and seated in a big chair.*

KING. Daughter, the news of your recovery has certainly been received with great joy by our neighbors as well as our own subjects and tonight's celebration is to be a gala affair, for delegations have already arrived from

nations far and near and Santa Claus has promised to come in person and deliver their gifts to you, their beloved little Princess. I trust you feel as well as you look, my dear.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Father, I have already forgotten that I was ever aught but well and I am sure I shall enjoy every minute of tonight's entertainment.

Enter LORD CHAMBERLAIN

LORD CHAMBERLAIN. Your Majesty, the guests have arrived.

KING. Let the festivities begin.

Enter SCOTCH DANCERS

SCOTCH DANCERS.

From Scotland fair we greetings bring
To you, dear Princess, and you, oh King.
We're truly glad you're well once more
And good wishes bring you by the score.

KING. Thank you, my bonnie lassies, we're glad to have you with us this happy Christmas eve. We have heard a great deal about that dance they call—what is it, now? Oh, yes, the "Highland Fling." We would be very much pleased to have you show us a few steps.

SCOTS.

The Highland Fling we'll gladly do,
Or anything that will please you.

[*Dance Highland Fling and exeunt.*]

[*Enter* DUTCH DANCERS]

DUTCH DANCERS.

In our vooden shoes
Ve came all de vay
To vish you a Merry
Christmas today.

And now, if you vish,
Ve'll dance you a dance;
It may not quite suit you,
But ve'll take a chance.
[*Give Dutch dance and exeunt.*]

PRINCESS ELAINE. Oh, Father dear, aren't they too cute?

[*Enter* JAPS]

KING. Welcome, little friends! You have indeed come a long way.

JAPS.

From far Japan, from friends quite true,
The season's greetings we bring to you.
[*They do a Japanese dance and exeunt.*]

PRINCESS ELAINE. I like them best of all.

[*Enter* FRENCH MAID]

FRENCH MAID.

My home is far across ze sea
In zat *be-a-ut-i-ful* city zay call Paree.
Bes' wishes I bring to you from France,
And if you wish I too will dance.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Please, dear friend! I shall love to watch you dance; I am hoping that some day soon I too may learn and the one who most pleases me tonight may perchance become dancing teacher to the Princess Elaine.

[MAID *does French dance and exit*]

[*Enter* RUSSIANS]

RUSSIANS.

We come from the land of ice and snow,
Where wintry winds just blow and blow!
Russia is cold, but we've hearts warm and true,
And very best wishes we bring now to you.

[*They dance and exeunt.*]

[*Enter* CHINESE]

CHINESE.

We nice little Chinee boys—
Ho-ling—Hop-sing!
We do little Chinee dance.
Much joy we you bling.

[*They dance and exeunt.*]

[*Enter* SPANISH DANCER]

SPANISH DANCER.

Merry Christmas, dear Princess!
Best wishes from Spain.
I'll dance my best now, and
Hope we may meet again.

[*She dances and exit.*]

[*Enter* SANTA CLAUS, *panting and out of breath*]

[SANTA, *while speaking, removes screen or has curtain raised, disclosing numerous packages which he delivers to the* PRINCESS. *He hands her the small packages first—these need not be opened. The large boxes Santa opens.* PRINCE CHARMING'S *box should be nicely decorated and may be on wheels.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Well, I declare, I'm here at last and just in time, it seems. I was getting terribly nervous and worried, for I was afraid I would be late and I didn't want to disappoint you, especially after I had promised to attend to this business tonight. I must get to work, for my time is limited these days and I see a good many packages to be delivered.

[SANTA *hands out gifts which have been brought by all the dancers: Wooden Shoes, Chinese Parasol, Japanese Fan, Jack-in-the-Box; Child in Japanese costume jumps out of big box and does eccentric dance; French Doll, small child dressed as doll, steps out of fancy box, does French doll dance; Rabbit, boy or girl, jumps out of box and hops around.*]

Suitable exclamations follow each presentation.

One large box remains partially hidden and is overlooked by SANTA.

KING. It has all been very lovely—such a demonstration of loyalty and friendship is certainly very gratifying and pleasing to both Her Royal Highness and Ourselves. There is but one thing missing—Didst notice it, daughter? Does it not seem strange that King Cheer of Utopia, our nearest and dearest friend, should send no delegate to take part in our festivities?

PRINCESS ELAINE. Yes, Father, I too had expected at least some token of their friendship.

SANTA CLAUS. Ho, there! What's this? Friends, wait just a minute, please. It seems I overlooked something. Here is one more package and it seems to be quite substantial, too. [*Reads card on box.*] To be delivered in person to Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elaine.

[*Box is opened and out steps* PRINCE CHARMING.]

PRINCE CHARMING.

Search as I might my country fair,
I could find nothing that I would care
To offer thee this Christmas day,
But still I could not stay away.
And so I've brought this dainty ring,
Hoping thee happiness 'twould bring.
Utopia fair shall be thy land
If thou wilt accept my heart and hand.

PRINCESS ELAINE. Yes, I will gladly be thy wife, if—Oh may I, Father?

KING. Nothing could give me more pleasure than an alliance with our friends of Utopia.

[*Stage business*]

PRINCESS ELAINE. Now I shall be truly happy. Prince Charming, will you teach me to walk? Or perhaps we'll dance into the hearts of your people?

PRINCE CHARMING. Why, they love you already.

KING. Come, all gather around and join in our Christmas carol.

[*All return for finale.*]

FANCY DRILLS AND MARCHES

THE CHRISTMAS BELLS

MARIE IRISH

FOR TEN OR MORE GIRLS, OR BOYS AND GIRLS

Each child wears a large bell of double red crepe paper fastened in front of the body and another in the back, the two being joined at the sides by double strips of paper. A double ruffle of red crepe paper is also worn around the neck. Around each wrist they wear a double strip of the red, with several small bells sewed onto it; similar strips, less than an inch wide, are worn around the ankles, these also carrying the tiny bells.

To lively music the children enter in single file, half from the left corner of back, half from the right; if boys and girls both take part, let one file be headed by a boy, the other by a girl, then place boys and girls alternately. The files skip up the sides to the front, waving their hands from side to side to keep the bells ringing. From the corners of front they come across to points halfway between the side and the center of front; here each file runs down to the back of stage, then to the center of back, where they meet and form couples.

Couples join inside hands and raise them; the outside hands are swung back and forth at sides, with lively motions. They come up the center to front of stage; here one member of each couple goes to the right corner of front, the ohter to the left. The files pass down the sides and form in two lines across the back of stage, facing the front. If boys take part, they take places on the back row with the girls in the front line.

Those on the front row join hands and run abreast half-

way up the stage, then halt, swaying hands from side to side, still joined, for eight counts; then they move backwards to places at back of stage, halting, and both lines swaying hands for eight counts. Now both lines run up the stage and halt with the front row just in advance of the center. All sway their hands, those on the back row being held higher than those on the front; then the first row runs up to the front of stage and halts. When they are at front, the second row runs up and halts back of them. All stand with hands on hips, and raise first one foot and then the other, lifting them rather high and swinging them from side to side.

Dropping hands to sides, one row faces the left, the other the right, and the files march sedately down the sides of stage, forming again in two rows across the back, facing the front. With hands held a little higher than top of head, every other one on the first row runs up to center of stage, swaying hands from side to side and dropping them as they halt. Then the others of the first line run up in the same manner, and halt in their places in the row. The two ends swing around and form a circle, standing with hands on hips.

Every other one of the back row now runs up and halts just back of the circle; then the others run up and halt in their places; when in position, the file turns to the right and, with hands raised and swaying, runs in a circle around the circle formed by the first line; they halt, each one beside a member of the inner circle.

With hands on hips, those on the inner circle pass around from right to left, while at the same time those on the outer circle go from left to right, passing slowly, raising feet high and swinging each across in front of the other as it is lifted.

The leader of the outer circle takes the file to the center

of left side, while at the same time the others go to the center of the right side. All pass down to corners of back, meet and form couples at the center of back, coming up the center of stage with hands joined and raised, the outside hands on hips. They advance rather slowly, raising the feet straight up in front, keeping knees stiff. On reaching the center of front they form a single file, skip down the right side and pass from stage.

THE CHRISTMAS CLOWNS

MARIE IRISH

FOR SEVEN BOYS

They wear white clown suits trimmed with ruffles and dots of bright red and green. The caps and ruffles may be of crepe paper. Some of the caps may be green with red dots, the rest red with green dots. Lips should be very red and cheeks have a bright red spot; eyebrows should be blackened and run up to a sharp point. Music should be lively and the "clowns" correspondingly so.

THE LEADER runs on and halts suddenly at the center of the back, strikes an amusing pose, looks the audience over and makes a face at them; then two more run on, one from each side, and halt at points diagonally toward the front from THE LEADER; they pose comically and make faces at audience; then two more come on and do likewise, and then the last two. When all are in position, they should be standing in a large angle, with the last two boys at the corners of front of stage, or near the front.

All place hands on hips; the leader marches up the center of stage; when he gets in line with the next two, they start marching with him; as the three reach the next two,

they join the line, until the seven are standing in line abreast across the front of the stage. They all bend forward, stretch their mouths and grin at the audience, then they throw kisses to the ladies.

First Boy [*nearest the left side*]. What for be all these folks lookin' so happy for?

Leader. Boob, don't you know? It's 'cause Chris-i-mus is comin' an' they're all looking for some presents. See that young lady over there? [*Points.*] She's lookin' awful happy 'cause she thinks her feller's goin' to give her something nice. [*All the boys laugh.*]

They all face to the right and pass down the right side, each time lifting the left foot high, with a sharp movement. They halt across the back of stage. The leader and the boy on either side join hands and the three come up the stage, stepping forward with the right foot, then setting the left foot directly in front of the right, with the heel touching right toes; then the right foot is placed in front of left, with heel touching left toes. Continue thus until nearly to front, moving rapidly, then halting.

Second Boy [*the one nearest the right*]. Huh, we can do that, too—'tain't hard.

The couple at the right and the one at the left, keeping the center space between them, come up rapidly, with the same step, until they are in line with the others. All face the left and pass rapidly around in a large circle, stepping ahead with the right foot, taking a long step, then moving the left foot up and setting it down with a thump directly back of the right, with toes touching the right heel. They step forward again with right foot and bring the left up in the same way; they continue thus around the circle, always

stepp.. g forward with right foot and bringing up the left. When they have completed the circle and are in line again across the stage, they join hands and go backwards to the back rapidly, moving the left foot back and setting it behind the right, then the right behind the left, some of the boys appearing to have hard work to keep up and step properly.

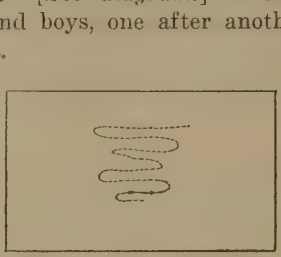
When they have reached the back, each one takes off his hat and bows in exaggerated manner to audience, makes a comical face and then bows again. They put their hats on again, having a hard time to get them on right and having to help each other.

They now join hands and run up to center; halt; THE LEADER claps his hands and the three on each side of him join hands, each three keeping line even as they run around THE LEADER, and each three trying to catch up with the

other. Suddenly one group of three turns quickly to face the other way, the two threes meet, bump into each other and several of the boys fall down. They get back into their places, in line abreast with THE LEADER, feeling of their bumps and making a great fuss.

THE LEADER starts up to center of front; boy on right, then one on left, then next on right, etc., fall into single file back of him. When they are in line, he begins to run

back and forth, all boys having their hands on knees as they follow him. [*See diagram.*] He goes faster and faster and the end boys, one after another, fall down in making the turns.



THE LEADER gets to the back of stage; the fallen ones get up and limp back to their places in the line. All bow, as above, the fallen ones painfully.

LEADER [*to audience*]. Ladies an' gentlemens, there is something I want to tell you. We hope it will not displease you, or cause any hard feelings. We hope you'll excuse us for saying so, but we really feel that we must. I can't delay any longer; I've got to tell you now. Please forgive us for presuming but—we—wish you all—a Merry Christmas!

They all bow humorously, then start from stage, part going off at one side, part the other, some turning handsprings and some somersaults, some falling flat and then crawling off on their hands and knees.

As an after-climax LEADER returns, holds up his hand for silence and speaks:

> They's a feel in the Christmas air goes right
> To the spot where a man lives at;
> It gives a feller a appetite
> There ain't no doubt about that.
>
> —*James Whitcomb Riley.*

MARCH OF THE MECHANICAL DOLLS

MARIE IRISH

FOR SIX LITTLE GIRLS

They have their cheeks brightly painted, their hair curled, and they wear fancy dresses, light stockings and black slippers, making up to look as much as possible like dolls.

They stare straight ahead, keeping body stiff as they walk. They lift their feet straight up from the floor, stepping high, with knees stiff and elbows held near body and the spine rigid.

The girls enter in single file at back of stage, go across to the opposite corner, turn and come back to the center, moving the forearm and hand without bending the wrist, up and down, with palms toward each other. They make the motions first with the right, then with the left hand, in a jerky manner, keeping time to their steps. Returning to center of the back, they come up the center to front of stage, pass diagonally to right corner of back, across the back to left corner and then up to center of front.

Turning stiffly, with several little steps, they go down the center of stage, first going out to left, second to right, just far enough so the six can stand in line, facing the back; they mark time, then slowly and with six short steps, all turn to face the front. Working their hands up and down vigorously, they come up to the center of stage abreast and halt, staring straight ahead with no expression. The speakers use high, unnatural voices.

THE FIRST.

We are Christmas dolls with pretty curls;
We're hunting homes with good little girls.

ALL say "Yes," bringing the hands up to shoulders, then

moving them down to the waist-line with a jerk and bow, bending at the waist, keeping neck and back stiff.

THE SECOND.

Our cheeks are red and our eyes are bright;
We're well behaved and very polite.

ALL say "Yes" as above.

No. 3.

We do not tease for candy to eat;
We keep our dresses clean and neat.

ALL say "Yes" and bow.

No. 4.

We want to be tended and cared for right,
And carefully put to bed at night.

ALL say "Yes" as above.

No. 5.

We don't want to come to grief or harm;
We don't want a broken leg or arm.

They all say "No" sharply and shake their heads by turning them first to the right and then to the left with a jerk, then facing back to face front, working arms as they turn heads.

No. 6.

Lovely dolls are made of tender stuff;
We don't want mothers who're cross and rough.

All say "No" and shake heads as above.

They walk jauntily around in a circle, with No. 1 as leader, working their arms this time from the shoulders, keeping elbows and wrists stiff. They come back and fall in line as above.

No. 1 says.

You have seen how very well we walk;
Now you shall hear how we can talk.

One after another along the row they bend forward from the waist and straighten up again, saying "Ma-ma" in the high squeaky tone of a talking doll. They sing in harsh, squeaky voice.

Tune: Yankee Doodle

We are the latest Christmas dolls,
We're fine as we can be, oh!
Perhaps you'll find us hanging high
Upon the Christmas tree, oh!
Tra, la, la, la, Christmas dolls,
Don't you think we're dandy?
We are Santa's choicest pets,
Oh, yes, we're sweet as candy.

They pass down the right side, diagonally from right corner of back to left corner of front, down left side and off, going slowly at the last, and the last two having a hard time to get off.

THE MARCHING STARS

MARIE IRISH

FOR NINE GIRLS

Each girl wears a straight white slip with rather close-fitting sleeves that come to the wrist. From the waist-line are suspended narrow white strips, each with a star at the end; the strips are of various lengths; the stars are made of bright yellow crepe paper on a frame of wrapping paper with the yellow covering on each side, to give sufficient body. The dress should have a low neck and white strips with a star at each end sewed about the neck band and falling down in various lengths upon the skirt. From the under part of the sleeve strips with stars at the end hang, the lengths growing shorter as they near the wrist. One star, wired, is fastened to a narrow band about the forehead.

The girls enter at right and come in single file to the center of back, where the first raises her right arm obliquely forward to the right, left being down at side; second raises the left arm, pointing upward to the left; third raises the right arm, and so on. They come up the center of stage; at the front THE LEADER halts, the second girl goes to her right, the third to her left, and so on, passing out to corners of front and down the sides. When the last one has passed her, THE LEADER marches backwards down the stage almost to the back, going slowly so that she reaches her position at the same time as do those from sides.

The first girl from each side steps into line with THE LEADER, these three joining hands; the last three of each line join hands, each of these three

keeping well to the side of stage and several feet back of the first. With joined hands raised high, the outside hands at shoulder height, the three groups come up stage to front. As they halt, the center girl of each group steps forward, hands still joined, and the outside girls kneel; they hold this pose for a moment and then the kneelers rise; the center girl steps back so she is two feet back of the outside girls, and then she too kneels. During these poses the arms should be curved gracefully and the tips of joined hands should be touching lightly.

All drop hands to sides; THE LEADER goes to center of front, then to the left corner, followed by the girl on her right, then the one on her left, single file; at same time the group nearest right comes up to front, the center girl joins the line, followed by the others, as above; group at the left comes up, ready to join the file in same order. They pass down left side and across back of stage; at right corner they form threes, the second girl stepping back of the first and taking a position on her right, the third at her left; each three the same. All come up the right of stage in threes and halt at front.

The first three turn to face left; with one hand held out at the front straight ahead, the other raised high and pointing upward to the left, the three march across to left side, keeping close together, and halt; then second three go across the same and halt; then the third three. Each three on halting drop hands to sides. As last group halts, THE LEADER starts down the left side, followed by the others in order of former marching. THE LEADER halts at center of back, stepping forward; the next three halt in line back of her; the last five form a third line, back of the second. THE LEADER raises her right arm, curving it so that her hand is above her head, and she raises her left hand obliquely upward; those on the other lines join hands, holding the

hands slightly forward. Keeping this position, they come up stage to the front. At center front THE LEADER takes the line to the right corner, the others following in single file, in above order. They come down right side of the stage and form in threes across the back, THE LEADER stopping at the center, after stepping forward two feet; the second girl goes over to left side, steps ahead and halts; third stops at right side, stepping forward into line even with THE LEADER; fourth halts back of girl at left; fifth back of THE LEADER; sixth back of girl at right; the last three halt back of fourth, fifth and sixth.

THE LEADER and the first girl at right and the one at the left come up stage, keeping space between them and the line even; they bend slightly forward, both hands extended obliquely forward, palms down, on a level with waist line; they step forward with right foot, then rise on toes; they go forward with left foot and then rise on toes of that foot. On reaching front of stage they kneel, clasp hands at center of breast, with elbows even with hands. As soon as first three reach front, the next three start, coming up in the same way and kneeling back of the others; then the third three come up.

As soon as last three get to front, those kneeling rise; those at sides come over to center; all face back; last girl to come up the center leads in single file down to center of back, the others falling into line in order of former marching, with THE LEADER last. Hands are held out at sides, straight from shoulders at arm's length, and moved up and down as file goes slowly down center. The first to reach back goes out to left, next to right, next to left, forming a group of three at each side, facing the front; the seventh and eighth girls remain at center, turning to face front and leaving space between them for THE LEADER, who turns and halts with them.

With hands raised and held forward, the tips of fingers meeting and head bent forward to peep under the raised hands, THE LEADER comes up center to front and halts; then the two who stood with her come up, in same position, and halt beside her; then the two groups come up, at same time, the center girl a little in advance of the other two, all in the above position.

All face the left; then they pass down left side, from left corner of back to center front; then to right corner back, diagonally, with hands extended at sides and moving up and down, gracefully but not in unison. Exeunt right back.

CHRISTMAS STOCKING DRILL

MARIE IRISH

FOR TWELVE CHILDREN

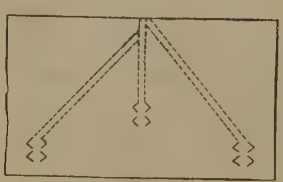
Each one wears a small red cap and a red sash tied at the left side. These may be made of crepe paper, if desired. Each one carries over the right shoulder a stick (an old broom handle will answer) wound with green paper, and having a long red stocking fastened to a hook at the top. The stockings may be made of red cloth, or light ones may be dyed with little trouble. Cut a form the size of the stocking and slip into each one to hold them in shape. The hooks at the top of the stocks may be made of heavy wire. When the children march in, the stockings hang back of the right shoulder.

The marchers enter in two lines of six each, one from the right corner of back, the other from the left; they come up to the center of sides, then diagonally to the center of back; those from the right go to the left corner of back, those from the left go to the right, the latter stepping in front of the corresponding member on the other file, as the lines cross at center of back. They come up the sides of stage and at the corners of front they pass diagonally again to the center of back; here they form couples and come up the center of stage to front, holding sticks

across the chest so that the stockings hang off beside the outside shoulder.

At center of front the first couple turns to the right, holding sticks so stockings are out in front of body; next couple goes to right, third to left, and so on, all holding stockings out to the front. They pass to corners of front, down sides, meet at center of back and form fours. They come up the stage in fours, the stockings still held to the front, those on the first line even with top of head; on the second line, higher; on the third, still higher.

At front of stage the two of each file who are on the right side come up and turn to the right; the others come up and turn to the left, all in single file, the stockings held with sticks over right shoulder, as on entering. They pass out to corners of front, down the sides, and meet at the center of back and form couples. The first couple comes up diagonally to the right, almost to front; the second comes up diagonally to the left; third to right, halting just back of the first; fourth to the left, halting just back of the second; the fifth and sixth couples come up the center of stage and halt several feet farther back than those at sides. When all are in position, they turn so that all couples are standing back to back. [*See diagram.*]



All hold their sticks forward, raised, with tips pointing up to the side the member is facing, the stockings held high.

They sing:

Tune: ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Come, ye Christmas stockings,
Come ye to the wall,
Christmas eve is coming,
We shall need you all;
Long and short and large and small,
To your places go,
Fine you'll look upon the wall,
Hanging in a row.

Chorus:
Hail, ye Christmas stockings,
Oh, the joy we'll know,
When they're filled with presents
From the top to toe.

All face the front, with sticks held over right shoulders. The first couple to come up the stage now come to the center of front and go diagonally to the right corner of back; the others start at the same time, the second couple coming to center and going to left corner of back; the third couple come to center and follow the first; the fourth couple follow the second, fifth and sixth come up to front, the fifth going to the right, the sixth to the left. The members of all couples who are on the outside as they go down stage form a line of six [three from each side] across back of stage; the others form a second line of six just in front of them, all facing front.

Those on front line hold their sticks in right hand, pointing toward the left, and with the left hand hold the toe of the stocking out to the left, the face looking between the stick and the stocking. They come up to center of stage abreast; three turn sharply and go out to the center of right side, while the others go to left side; at center of sides they

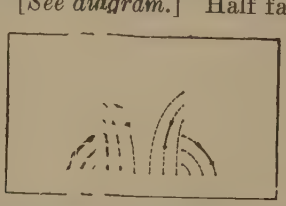
turn sharply and come back to center, in single file, and form a line of six; they continue up to front of stage, rest sticks on floor, stockings held at right side. Those on the second line, holding stockings as above, come up with the same movements and halt back of the first line.

Three from first line go to right, followed by three from second line; at same time the others go to the left; all halt along sides, facing, then they march forward until there is a six-foot avenue between the facing lines. They raise sticks and hold them forward, as they sing:

Countless Christmas stockings,
Hanging on the wall,
Santa Claus is coming,
He will fill you all;
Boys and girls are waiting,
And the joy they'll know
When they see you, brimming full,
Hanging in a row.

Chorus.

As they sing the chorus the lines march forward, wheeling until they are standing in a row, twelve abreast across the stage, facing front, with the stockings held out raised, in front of body. [*See diagram.*] Half face the right, half



the left, the halves going to the right and left sides, then down to meet at the center of back, where they form couples. The couples come up the center, turn to the right and pass from stage, sticks held as in opening march.

ACROSTICS AND MOTION SONGS

CHRISTMAS

MARIE IRISH

FOR NINE CHILDREN

The first speaker carries a large **C**, cut from several thicknesses of heavy paper and tacked to a frame made of lath, to keep it in shape. Letter should be 3 ft. long, covered with green crepe paper.

The other children carry letters to finish spelling Christmas. They come on one at a time, in turn of speaking, and each fastens a letter on the **C**, speaks, and then stands back of the one with the **C**, until a semicircle is formed. Fasten a loop of heavy cord at the top of each letter, by which to attach it to a tack on the **C**. The letters on the **C** should be covered with red crepe paper.

No. 1.

C—stands for the many children,
Children large and small, and grave and gay,
Who eagerly await the coming
Of a certain long-famous day;
C—for children, east and west,
Who love this day, of all days, best.

No. 2.

H—stands for the happy hearts
In mansion, cottage and bungalow,
Who are waiting for a certain Saint,
Who comes from land of ice and snow;
H—for hearts of girls and boys
Beating high with the season's joys.

No. 3.

R—stands for the rollicking racket
You will hear—so please take warning,
When well filled stockings are unloaded
On a certain day, in the morning;
R—for racket, merry and gay,
That's likely to last throughout the day.

No. 4.

I—that I bring stands for indigo,
A color that's well known as blue,
But who would be blue when Yuletide joys
Are thrilling us through and through?
I—for indigo, but who would choose,
When Santa's coming, to have the blues?

No. 5.

S—is for slumber, and sleep;
Early rising children despise,
But there's one day they jump out of bed
'Fore the dawn has lightened the skies;
S—for sleep, but 'twould be shocking
To sleep when you've a well filled stocking.

No. 6.

T—stands for toothsome taffy,
Which, with candy of various kinds,
Is one of good Santa's best gifts,
So 'tis thought by all youthful minds;
T—for taffy; but candy sweet
Will make you sick, if you overeat.

No. 7.

M—stands for mirth and merriment,
With bells that chime and carols to sing,
With dolls and toys, and all sorts of joys
That our best-loved day is sure to bring;
M—for mirth which with joyous cheer
Floods our homes at this time of year.

No. 8.

A—stands for all and for agree,
And I'm sure you'll all agree with me,
There are heaps of pleasure in the sight
Of gifts upon a well filled tree;
A—for agree, and we all with zest
Agree on the tree that we like best.

No. 9.

S—stands for smiles and we,
As you see are a smiling crowd,
For this word we've spelled makes us smile,
And even to laugh right out loud;

[All *laugh merrily.*]

S—for the smiles, sure to appear
When this wonderful day draws near.

[*The one with the C holds it forward, the others point to it.*]

No. 1. C
No. 2. H
No. 3. R
No. 4. I
No. 5. S
No. 6. T
No. 7. M
No. 8. A
No. 9. S

ALL.

Christmas! The best of all holidays.
Christmas! The day we lovingly praise.
The merry day that you all love, too—
We can see by your faces that you do.
We hope that from early morn till night,
Your hearts will be happy, gay and light
On Christmas!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

MARIE IRISH

FOR FOURTEEN CHILDREN

Each child carries a letter fastened to a wand that is wound with red crepe paper; the letters may be covered with evergreen or green crepe paper, and they should spell "Merry Christmas."

Enter the two children with M *and* E; *they stand together somewhat to the right of the center.*

FIRST CHILD.

M is for much and for many,
And much—oh, very much joy
Is coming to many and many
And many a girl and boy.

SECOND CHILD.

E is for eager and earnest,
And with eager and earnest eye
The boys and girls now are waiting
The glad day that is drawing nigh.

BOTH.

This M and this E spell a word,
As you all plainly can see,
And soon a most wonderful treat.
Is coming to *me* and to *me*.

[*The* FIRST CHILD *points to self at the first* "me," *the* SECOND CHILD *points at the second* "me."]

Enter the children with R, R *and* Y, *and stand in line with the others.*

THIRD CHILD.

R you, too, trying to be good,
As I am all the while,
So that Santa Claus will bring you
Gifts and toys of latest style?

FOURTH CHILD.

R you planning, as children should,
To do your humble part,
And bring a bit of joy and cheer
To some sad and lonely heart?

FIFTH CHILD.

'Y, oh, 'Y, perhaps you ask,
Do children sunny smiles wear?
'Cause a wondrous day is coming,
And the spirit's in the air.

ALL FIVE.

M—E—R, and R—Y, Merry!
We spell it loud and clear,
As we look forward to the time
Of peace, and joy, and cheer.

Enter the nine with the letters spelling "Christmas." *They stand in line back of the first five, holding their letters higher than the heads of those on the first row, who hold theirs at shoulder height.*

FIRST CHILD [*on the back row*].

C—is for candy, tasty and sweet,
C is for carols to sing,
And for the chimes from steeples tall,
That across the valleys ring.

SECOND CHILD.

H—is for homes warm and cozy,
And for the holly of green,
That when the Yuletide season comes
Decorates the festal scene.

THIRD CHILD.

R—is for relatives dear,
Some near, some from far away,
Who come with greetings gay to spend
The season's merriest day.

FOURTH CHILD.

I—is a letter, straight and tall,
Not the kind of eyes that look
Eagerly in the early dawning
For doll and skates and picture-book.

FIFTH CHILD.

S—is for good, smiling Santa,
Who comes this time of the year
From his home in the far, far North,
With his sled and frisky reindeer.

SIXTH CHILD.

T—is for Tommy and Thurman,
And Teddy and Theo and Tim,
And all of the boys who 're wond-ring
What Santa is going to bring *him.*

SEVENTH CHILD.

M—is for mischief and misdeeds,
From which boys and girls refrain
At about this time of the year,
For reasons I need not explain.

EIGHTH CHILD.

A—is the automobile,
With a loudly tooting horn
That I 'd like to get for a present,
All my own, on Christmas morn.

NINTH CHILD.

S—is for stop, and my friends,
That 's what we 're going to do,
As soon as we give the greeting
That we 've brought this day for you.

THE NINE [*in concert*].

Christmas is the word we 're spelling,
Christmas, that we all love well,
And we hope the Yuletide spirit
Casts on you its merry spell.

ALL FOURTEEN [*in concert*].

Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas,
We wish you, large and small;
May Santa bring some dandy gifts
That please you, one and all.

HIS STAR

MARIE IRISH

FOR NINE CHILDREN

They stand in line, with a space between the third and fourth, each holding a letter, the letters to spell H-I-S S-T-A-R. *They speak in order.*

No. 1.

H—oly was the solemn night
Long centuries ago,
When the shining stars looked down
On the quiet hills below.

No. 2.

I—nns in many sleeping towns
Were filled to overflowing,
With the Jewish travelers
To Jerus'lem going.

No. 3.

S—heep upon Judean hills
Quietly were sleeping,
While about them guarding shepherds
Midnight watch were keeping.

No. 4.

S—uddenly a heavenly light
Shone on them where they lay,
And the gloomy hills were lighted
With a bright and glorious ray.

No. 5.

T—idings of great joy unto
The shepherds were made known,
As the glory of the Lord
Round about them shone.

No. 6.

A—ngel unto them proclaimed
The baby Jesus' birth, and then
A heavenly host appeared and sang,
"Peace on earth, good will to men."

No. 7.

R—iders from the Orient
Across the trackless sand,
Journeyed on with eager faith,
Seeking an unknown land.

THE SEVEN [*holding their letters forward*].

His star shone in the heavens,
His bright and glorious star,
And brought the group of wise men
To worship from afar.

Enter the two with C *and* M. [*The one with the* C *stands at the head, the other at the foot of the line.*]

No. 8.

C—hrist was born in Bethlehem,
Oh, tell the Christmas story!
Within the manger lay the King
Who came from realms of glory.

No. 9.

M—agi, traveling from afar,
Came to worship at His feet,
And we would worship as the Christmas
Story we repeat.

[*Quickly but with no confusion they change places,* R *coming up next to* H, T *next to first* S, *and stand so that the letters spell Christmas.*]

ALL.

Christmas! The birthday of the Babe
Who came to earth from glory,
And we today with hearts of love,
Proclaim the Christmas story.

IN GRANDMA'S DAY

MARIE IRISH

Tune: LONG, LONG AGO

Grandmother tells us that when she was young,
Long, long ago, long, long ago,
Candles were lighted and carols were sung,
When she was young, long ago;
Grandma says stockings, long, short, large and small,

[*Measure various lengths with the hands.*]

All in a row were hung up on the wall,

[*The hand moved to show a row of stockings.*]

Then Santa came bringing presents for all,
When she was young, long ago.

Grandmother had strings of popcorn so white,

[*Hands out, measuring the string.*]

Long, long ago, long, long ago,
Had nuts and candy and red apples, bright,
When she was young, long ago;

And in her stocking, she found, Christmas morn,
A lovely dolly, as sure as you're born,

[*Sway hands back and forth as if rocking a doll.*]

While brother Joe got a ball and a horn,

[*Hands up, one in front of the other for the horn.*]

When she was young, long ago.

There were no automobiles then, you know,
Long, long ago, long, long ago,
There was no telephone nor radio,
When she was young, long ago;
But Santa came with his reindeer and sleigh,
Filled up the stockings, then scooted away—

[*The right hand raised and extended to the right.*]

Christmas was kept much the same as today,
When she was young, long ago.

MOTHER EARTH'S MANTLE

MARIE IRISH

Tune: AULD LANG SYNE

Sail, clouds of gray, across the sky,

[*Raise the right hand to the left and move it across to the right.*]

And o'er the land hang low;
Sail, clouds of gray, and bring the earth

[*Move the hand as above, dropping it each time, at the side.*]

A covering of snow.

Chorus:
For soon, soon, Santa Claus
A-traveling must go.

[*Extend the hands in front of the body, then move them with a circular sweep out to each side.*]

So, clouds of gray, give Mother Earth

[*Raise both hands upward and hold them so, then lower them slowly on "covering."*]

Her covering of snow.

Fall, flakes of snow, from clouds of gray,

[*Look upward anxiously.*]

Fall slowly, softly down,

[*Raise the hands, lower them a short distance and hold them so, lower still more and hold them so, then the third time lower them to below the waist line.*]

And cover well and cover deep
The road from Santa's town.

Chorus

Good Santa cannot fail to make
His trip with loaded sleigh,
So let the soft flakes fall and fall,

[*Raise both hands to the left and lower them, raise them in front of the body and lower them, then raise them to the right and lower them again.*]

And fall from clouds of gray.

Chorus

PANTOMIMED SONGS AND PANTOMIMES

RING, CHRISTMAS BELLS

MARIE IRISH

To be pantomimed as the words are sung off stage.

Tune: FLAG OF THE FREE

Ring, Christmas bells,
Your chiming tells

[*Raise both hands to the right, with palms to the front; sway to the left, with the right hand held higher at the right, but as they reach position at left, the left hand held higher; sway back to position at right.*]

How in Judea a heavenly throng,
One winter's night,
As stars shone bright,
Sang to the shepherds a glorious song.

[*Step obliquely back with the left foot, drop left hand to side, with right hand raised at arm's length and pointing upward, and body half turned to the right, the eyes raised, face expressing awe.*]

Rang their hosannas, mighty to hear,
Praise to the Christ-child in Bethlehem near,

[*Face front, looking upward, with both hands raised, held close, then moved out to sides, held for a moment and then dropped to sides.*]

While on the ground,
Awed by the sound,
Prostrate the shepherds were trembling with fear.

[*Hold left hand at the side, the right extended to the front, pointing down, as at shepherds, then moved to the right and dropped to side.*]

Ring, Christmas bells,
Your chiming tells,

[*The same motions as in the first two lines in above stanza.*]

How in the manger the fair Christ-child lay,
A gift of love,
From realms above,

[*Move right foot forward, with body inclined, right hand extended, eyes intent, as if seeing the manger.*]

Blessing the world on that first Christmas day—

[*Hold hands at center of breast, then move them out to sides, at arm's length, with a wide sweep. Bring foot back to position and stand with hands at sides.*]

Came then the shepherds, there to behold,

[*Extend the right hand to right at arm's length, then bring it up in front of body.*]

Mary and baby, as angels had told,

[*Step back with the right foot, with hands clasped in front of breast, eyes gazing in wonder.*]

And from afar
A shining star
Guided the wise men with presents of gold.

[*Move the left foot obliquely to the left, with the body half turned to left and inclined, the left hand raised high to the left, then brought down slowly until in front of body, at a little below shoulder height.*]

Ring, Christmas bells,
Your chiming tells

[*Motions as in these lines above.*]

Of the Christ spirit the world now should heed,
And ev'ry heart
Enjoy a part
In keeping Christmas in word and in deed.

[*Bring hands up slowly and clasp them over the heart, then with left still over the heart, extend the right hand to the front, palm up, give an energetic nod with the head, smiling cheerfully.*]

Giving and serving, this be our plan,
Taking some blessing to those whom we can,

[*Half turn to right and extend the hands obliquely to the right, with the right foot advanced; turn to half face the left, with left foot advanced, and extend hands to the left.*]

Then sweet and clear
The song we 'll hear,
"Blest be His birthday, for Christ reigns indeed."

[*Turn to face front, advance right foot slightly forward, with body inclined, face raised, left hand out slightly at the side, right raised, palm to the front, at right of face in a listening attitude.*]

CHRISTMAS BELLS

MARIE IRISH

The lines are read by some one at front, off stage. Three little boys enter, each carrying a red bell, such as are sold in stores at Christmas time, fastened to a stout cloth wound with green paper. This is held with an end in each hand, the bell being in the center. As the lines are read the hands are moved from side to side, gently, to swing the bells.

READER.

There are Christmas bells that mutely hang
With a bright and cheerful glow,
In many a home, on many a wall,
As merry hours speeding go.

They bring to mind, with their voiceless chime,
The melodies of the Christmas time.

The boys pass around in a circle and off, swinging bells. During the reading of the next, sleigh bells are rung merrily, off stage.

READER.

There are other Christmas bells that chime
With a jingle, jingle, jing,
As Santa comes with his loaded sleigh
His store of presents to bring.

They jingle, jingle, just this way,
The noisy little bells on Santa's sleigh.

Three or more prettily dressed little girls enter and stand in a row, each carrying a good-sized doll. These should be showily dressed, in various bright colors, with stylish gowns, large, attractive hats, and pretty slippers. The dolls are held forward as lines are read.

READER.

But the best-loved belles of Christmas,
(You spell it b-e-l-l-e)
Are these lovely belles of fashion,
So charming and pleasing to see.

Don't gaze too long upon them, friends,
Or they'll charm you with their spells,
For they're very fascinating,
These best-beloved Christmas belles.

The girls pass around in a circle, holding dolls lóvingly, then off.

SOME FOLKS

MARIE IRISH

Tune: JUANITA

Some folks are gloomy,
Glum and gloomy, sour and sad.

[*With hands on hips and head thrust forward, scowl darkly, corners of mouth drawn down.*]

They don't like Christmas,
Giving makes them—mad!

[*Set right foot forward with a thud, hold right hand clenched and out slightly at the side, and scowl more ferociously.*]

Buying, buying, buying,
Gifts for this one and for that,

[*Shake the head sadly, pointing jerkily out to audience with the left hand and then with the right.*]

Sets them sadly sighing
'Cause the purse gets—flat!

[*Make a motion of pulling out a purse and looking at it, shaking head sadly.*]

But it, it *is* not,
No, it is not you nor I;

[*Draw right foot back to position, stand up straight, point to the audience, then hit self on chest.*]

We don't—look—this way—

[*Pout, scowl and frown, with head thrust forward.*]
No, not you nor I.

Some folks are cranky,
Don't like Santa Claus a bit;

[*Half turn face to the left, making up a face, with hands held up in disgust, the right farther to the front than the left, as if motioning* SANTA *away.*]

Don't like his presents,
Almost have a fit!

[*Shake both hands at the right, then both at the left, turning head away.*]

Don't believe in Christmas,
Don't believe in spending money,

[*Look disgusted, resting the right elbow in palm of left hand, a finger of right hand denting the right cheek.*]

Won't hang up their stockings,
Don't want any fun!

[*Raise a hand at each side in disdain, with palms to front and fingers spread, left foot forward, body drooping, face scowling.*]

But it, it *is* not,
No, it is not you nor I!

[*With left foot in position, stand straight, slap hands together and smile.*]

We smile just this way,
When Christmas is nigh.

[*Strike a happy attitude and grin broadly.*]

CHRISTMAS JOYS

MARIE IRISH

READER.

Among the chief of Christmas joys
Are those that make a lot of noise.
Some boys like gift of cap or jacket,
Others like things that make a racket.
Ted begins in the early morn
To wake the natives with his horn;

[*Pause*]

[*A boy with a horn comes on and marches around, tooting loudly, marching proudly with feet lifted high. He halts at back of stage during the following lines.*]

READER.

While Joe, to all entreaties dumb,
Makes soulless music with his drum.

[*Pause*]

[*A second boy with a drum comes on and joins the first; they march about the stage in a circle, one tooting, the other*

beating the drum. They halt and remain quiet during the lines.]

READER.

And since on noise there's no restriction,
The folks now have a new affliction,
For Tom, who drum and horn has outgrown,
Receives from Santa a saxophone.

[*Pause*]

[*A young man with a saxophone comes on, stands at center of stage and plays tunelessly; the two boys march back and forth across back of stage, tooting and drumming. After a brief medley they are silent.*]

READER.

Oh Merry Christmas, with dolls and toys,
And cheer and joy, and racket and noise!

[*The smaller young man goes off blowing saxophone, the boys follow, drumming and tooting the horns.*]

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS

MARIE IRISH

As the lines are given by some one off stage, various shoppers pass across the stage, some from right to left, others from left to right. They should be of various sizes, a fat lady, several men, some young lads and several others. All should have bundles; some should keep dropping them and, trying to recover them, drop others. Some should run into each other and send bundles flying. Aim to make this pantomime as amusing as possible, with some getting angry at those who run into them and others trying to help pick up their neighbors' packages. A small boy or two to get

in the way and laugh at the older folks' misfortunes will be a help.

READER.

Oh, the busy Christmas shoppers,
How they dash along and hurry,
Wond'ring what gift they've forgotten,
As they rush along and scurry.

Oh, the Christmas shoppers laden
With bundles large, and fat, and small,
Trying to control some package
That has a tendency to fall.

Christmas shopping is the limit!
'Tis perplexing and no joking—
Great guns! There drops another bundle,
And now another! How provoking!

Oh, my land! Look where you're going!
Do you want to break this vase?
If I get these gifts home safely,
I'll give thanks with fervent grace.

Tut! Tut! Such language is distressing!
Here, let me help you, madam, please;
Such pleasant work to go a-shopping,
Buying loads for Christmas trees!

There drops a package, now another,
Now one's falling over here;
Well, cheer up, folks, and let's be thankful
That Christmas comes but once a year.

Oh, the busy Christmas shoppers,
Sad and weary, tired of living,
Hard it is to earn the pleasure
And the joy of Christmas giving.

FATHER, THE HERO

MARIE IRISH

Set the stage with a small table, some easy-chairs and a few articles to give a homey atmosphere. Father sits reading.

READER:

'Tis many a man is a hero,
A Christmas hero staunchly brave;
He lets the family spend for presents
The cash he's worked *so hard* to save.

[*A mother of commanding size and manner enters and gestures, as if asking for money.*]

Mother must have another bill,
She forgot a gift for Cousin Sue;
And Uncle Joe has sent a package,
So now she must send *him* something, too.

[*Father listens, shakes his head in agreement, takes out a pocketbook and gives her a bill. She sails off.*]

Then sister Josie comes with cunning,
And artful smiles and winning wiles;

[*A young lady comes on, stands beside Father's chair, pats his head, ruffles his hair and smiles upon him beamingly, making as if talking.*]

Her Christmas money is all gone—quite;
The way it vanished was sure a fright,
This buying presents is *such* a bore—
She really *must* have a few dollars more.

[*Father shakes his head to signify "No"; she teases, patting his cheeks and smiling at him.*]

And so, of course, with a patient grin,
Father capitulates and gives in.

[*He sighs, gets out pocketbook and gives her a bill; she waves it gaily and runs off.*]

Then Jack and Jennie come prancing along

[*A boy and girl come hurrying in, each trying to reach Father first.*]

And tease and tease for a few dimes more;

[*Each pretends to talk, gesturing and holding out a hand for money.*]

They've *got* to buy some things for the tree—
They can get them down at the Ten-Cent store.
And father lets them have their way,
As fathers oft have done before,

[*He gets out his pocketbook, gives each some change, and they run off.*]

And he looks at his purse and thinks with cheer,

[*He examines pocketbook, shaking it to show it is empty.*]

"Thank goodness, this comes but once a year."

[*He gets up, shakes his head mournfully and goes off.*]

Then when Christmas morning comes, ah yes!
Is father happy? Well, I guess!

[*Mother and big sister, Jack and Jennie, all hurry on, the children playing with toys. Father comes sauntering in and stands watching.*]

Mother gives him the curtains, lovely and dear,
That the best room's needed for a year;

[*Mother gives him a package, gesturing; he smiles good-naturedly.*]

They gave him a necktie much too bright,

[*Jennie gives it to him, the rest making gestures of approval.*]

And a pair of slippers, nice, but too tight;

[*Mother also gives these; Father acts pleased.*]

Josie gives him a salad dish, with a smile,
That they've needed to give their table style.

[*He tries to act delighted. The others gesture over it lavishly.*]

Yes, father smiles with a pleasant look,
As he thinks of his empty pocketbook;
He thinks of the toys to be smashed with speed,
And of all the peresents the folks don't need;
But he takes it all in a cheerful way—
Yes, father's a hero of Christmas day.

[*The rest go off; Father sits, smiling dolefully as curtain falls.*]

TABLEAUX

GOOD NIGHT

MARIE IRISH

Two little girls in long white nightgowns stand in a subdued light. They face the audience, with their inside hands joined, while some one off stage reads the lines:

Good Santa Claus is coming,
This very, very night,
So chilluns must run off to bed,
And close their eyes up tight.
It makes Saint Nick'las nervous
When small folks try to peep,
So we will bid you all good night,
And hurry off to sleep.

UNDER THE MISTLETOE

MARIE IRISH

Suspend from the ceiling a bunch of mistletoe, or of small, light green leaves that resemble it. Beneath it place a small girl and a boy a little larger, both charmingly dressed. The little boy is slightly bent forward, as if to kiss her; the little girl, one foot extended backward, body held somewhat aloof, her head partly turned, is watching him shyly with a finger in her mouth. These words are read by some one off stage:

To kiss, or not to kiss!
Older folks seem to think it's bliss.
Perhaps when these two older grow
They'll be fonder of the mistletoe.

AUNT SUSAN'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT

MARIE IRISH

An appropriately costumed old maid, with corkscrew curls, stands with her profile to the audience, her hands

clasped ecstatically, a simpering smile on her face. At her feet kneels a man past middle age, his hands raised imploringly, his face upturned and anxious. The following lines are read off stage:

Mother wants Santa to bring her
A new auto, strong and geared high;
Fred wants an up-to-date airplane,
To travel the distant sky;
Bess wants a long string of pearls,
Of creamy and delicate hue;
But Aunt Susan wants Santa to bring
Her a *man,* kind, loving and true.

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS

MARIE IRISH

Upon a light background at the back of the stage suspend several stockings of various sizes. In the center of the group place a stocking at least five feet long, made by sewing the upper part of the leg of a large stocking to the top of another large one. The stage should be dimly lighted, while a reader, off stage, gives these lines:

No, a giant doesn't live here,
No, not at all,
Nor own this mammoth stocking,
Hanging on the wall;
This great, great, great big long one
Was hung by little Jim,
Who thinks it's not too large for all
That St. Nick should leave for *him.*

OVERLOOKED

MARIE IRISH

Set the stage with an old stand, a couple of broken chairs and a box covered with newspapers, with a wash

basin on it. At the center of the background and several feet from it, a small boy kneels with his face in his hands; beside him an older girl stands with one hand on his shoulder, the other holding an empty stocking. At the right of the center and back of the children a mother stands in drooping attitude, her eyes cast down, her left hand slightly extended and clenched, the right hand closed, the knuckles pressed against the lips.

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

MARIE IRISH

A small girl sits in a low chair holding on her lap a large new doll. A small boy dressed as a doctor stands in front of her, holding one of the doll's hands and looking at his watch as he takes the doll's pulse. The little mother gazes up anxiously at the doctor as the lines are read:

'Tis the day after Christmas.
Oh, doctor, come quick!
This precious new dolly
Is frightfully sick.
It may be a fever,
Or—the measles, you know;
What? She ate too much candy—
Well—perhaps—that is so!

PEACE ON EARTH

MARIE IRISH

A number of persons, boys and girls, young men and women, should be dressed to represent various nations—Mexican, Turkish, Japanese, Syrian, Russian, Chinese, Italian, Indian, etc. Each group shows a friendly spirit toward the others, the Turk and Syrian shaking hands; the Russian, with a Jap on one side and a Chinese on the other, stands at the center of the back with hands joined; at one

side of the latter and somewhat in advance, an Indian stands facing and shaking hands with a Mexican; at the center of the front a little American girl is holding out a dolly to a little negro girl.

Rather high across the background show the words:

Peace on Earth, Good Will Among Nations

At one side, standing on a low pedestal a girl costumed as an angel is pointing to the legend.

DREAMING OF THE ABSENT

MARIE IRISH

A sweet-faced grandmother sits, profile view, in a low rocker in front of a table on which burn two candles. She holds before her a picture of a young man, at which she gazes sadly.

THE CHRISTMAS GRACES

MARIE IRISH

Three pretty young women with white robes and draped mantels stand in a group. Soft curtains may be used for the mantels. The girl in the center stands nearer the background. Each holds a white cloth, twelve inches wide and from half a yard to thirty inches long, bearing her name in letters of red and green. LOVE stands at the center, with her shield held in both hands horizontally across her breast; at her right, GENEROSITY holds one end of a shield with the left hand at the left hip, the right hand holding the other end out from the right shoulder; at the left of LOVE, PEACE holds her shield with her right hand at the center of her breast, the left hand slightly forward at the height of the left hip.

SONGS

HAIL, SANTA CLAUS

HOBERT O. BOGGS

Tune: HAIL TO OUR SCHOOL

Hail, Santa Claus,
All hail, Santa Claus!
He makes us happy
When skies are snappy.
All hail, Santa Claus!

Hail, Santa dear!
All hail, Santa dear!
He makes us merry
On Christmas cheery,
All hail, Santa Claus!

Hail, Santa Claus!
All hail, Santa Claus!
With bright eyes dancing
And reindeer prancing.
All hail, Santa Claus!

Hail, Santa's here!
All hail, Santa's here!
To make us pleasant
With many a present.
All hail, Santa's here!

OLD SANTA CLAUS

HOBERT O. BOGGS

Tune: YANKEE DOODLE

Old Santa Claus is a fine old man,
We children think he's dandy.
He fills our socks as full as he can
With toys and nuts and candy.

Chorus:

Santa is a fine old man,
Santa is a dandy,
He fills our socks as full as he can
With toys and nuts and candy.

His nose is red as a sugarplum,
His hair is white as snow,
His merry eyes are full of fun,
His whiskers hang down just so. [*Measure on chests.*]

Chorus.

His legs are short, his arms are, too,
He has a little round belly,
That shakes about when he walks around,
Like a bowl of apple jelly.

Chorus.

In a reindeer sled he goes about
To make all children merry,
Who do not fuss or sulk or pout
On Christmas, bright and cheery.

Chorus.

And now, dear folks, whom here we see,
If you have all been good uns,
Perhaps Old Santa will visit thee
And leave some cold bread puddin's.

Chorus:

For Santa is a fine old man,
Santa is a dandy,
He used to fill your stockings, too,
With toys and nuts and candy.

SANTA CLAUS

ELIZABETH F. GUPTILL

Tune: JINGLE BELLS

There is a dear old man,
His name I'm sure you know,
His home is in the North,
Where all is ice and snow.
He's busy all the year,
As busy as can be,
With making playthings gay and bright,
To give to you and me.

Chorus:

Santa Claus, Santa Claus,
Jolly as can be,
He'll be here at Christmas time
With gifts for you and me.
Santa Claus, Santa Claus,
How his sleigh bells chime!
Oh, we love dear Santa Claus,
And good old Christmas time.

Within old Santa's barn,
Eight tiny reindeer feed,
Ready to draw his sleigh,
When he of them has need.
We listen Christmas Eve,
To hear upon the roof,
The jingle of their silver bells,
And patter of each hoof.

If all the year you've tried
To be good girls and boys,
You'll find your stocking filled
With candy, nuts and toys;
But if you have been bad,
You'd best be good, right quick,
Or in your stocking, you will find,
Old Santa's left a stick.

CHRISTMAS TIME

ELIZABETH F. GUPTILL

Tune: AMERICA

'Tis the glad Christmas time,
Bells in the steeples chime,
Ringing glad cheer.
Now let good will and mirth
Echo o'er all the earth,
Day that our Lord had birth,
Best of the year.

Once the dear Christ Child lay
Cradled upon the hay,
On Christmas morn.

Angels on snowy wing,
"Glory to God" did sing,
"Sweet peace He comes to bring.
The Christ is born!"

Trav'ling from lands afar,
Led by a wondrous star,
Wise men of old
Found Him, the Babe they sought.
Rich gifts to Him they brought
In caskets richly wrought—
Incense, myrrh and gold.

So, at the Christmas time,
Our happy voices chime,
Singing His praise.
Let joy and peace and mirth
Echo o'er all the earth,
This day of Jesus' birth,
Glad day of days!

LONG, LONG AGO

CLARA A. NASH

Tune: LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

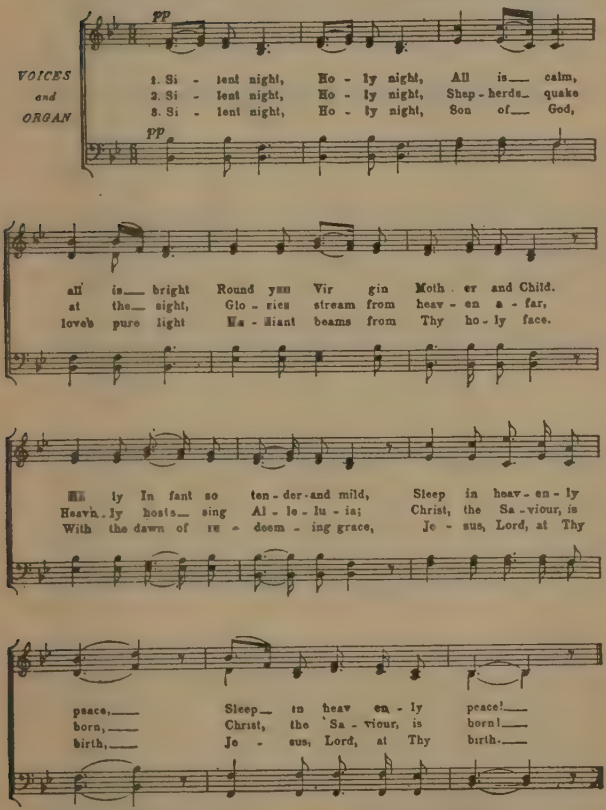
Long, long ago when shepherds watched their sheep,
By day, by night,
And Bethlehem lay wrapt in peaceful sleep,
A Star shone bright.
How wonderful, how calm with peace its ray,
Telling the birth of Christ and Christmas Day!

A message sweet still lights each passing year;
Though night steal on,
We know the way ahead, we have no fear;
The dark is gone.
How wonderful that shining, shining ray,
Forever near, brighter each Christmas Day!

CAROLS

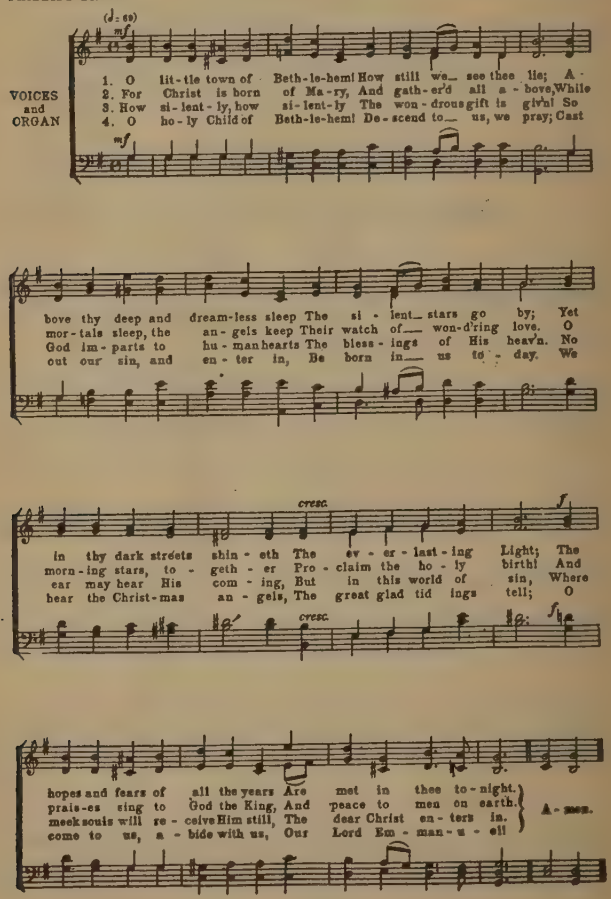
SILENT NIGHT

FRANZ GRUBER
Harmonised by Sir John Stainer


VOICES and ORGAN
pp
1. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, All is calm,
2. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, Shep - herds quake
3. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, Son of God,
all is bright Round yon Vir gin Moth er and Child.
at the sight, Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
lovely pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face.
Ho ly In fant so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
Heav'n - ly hosts sing Al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sa - viour, is
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy
peace, Sleep in heav en - ly peace!
born, Christ, the Sa - viour, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

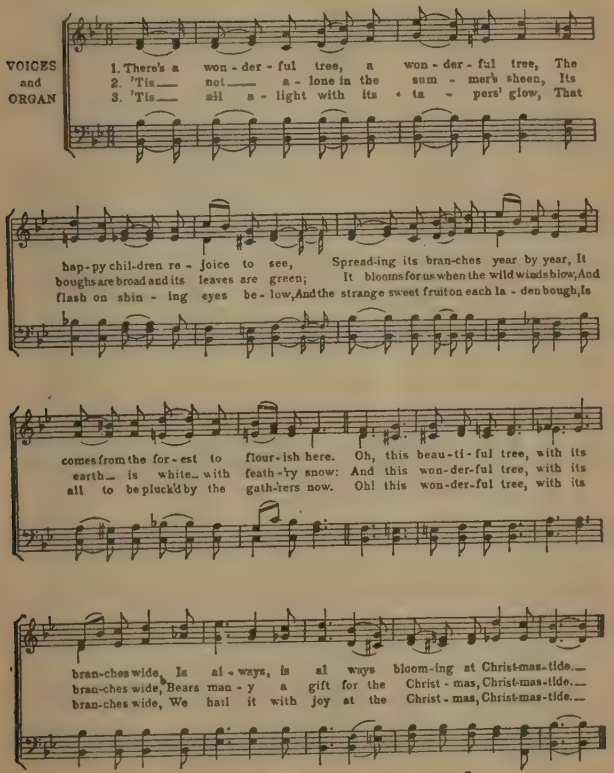
O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

PHILLIPS BROOKS — LEWIS H. REDNER


(♩= 69)
mf
VOICES and ORGAN
1. O lit-tle town of Beth-le-hem! How still we see thee lie; A-
2. For Christ is born of Ma-ry, And gath-er'd all a-bove, While
3. How si-lent-ly, how si-lent-ly The won-drous gift is giv'n! So
4. O ho-ly Child of Beth-le-hem! De-scend to us, we pray; Cast
bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si-lent stars go by; Yet
mor-tals sleep, the an-gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love. O
God im-parts to hu-man hearts The bless-ings of His heav'n. No
out our sin, and en-ter in, Be born in us to-day. We
cresc.
f
in thy dark streets shin-eth The ev-er-last-ing Light; The
morn-ing stars, to-geth-er Pro-claim the ho-ly birth! And
ear may hear His com-ing, But in this world of sin, Where
bear the Christ-mas an-gels, The great glad tid-ings tell; O
cresc.
f
hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to-night.
prais-es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.
meek souls will re-ceive Him still, The dear Christ en-ters in.
come to us, a-bide with us, Our Lord Em-man-u-el!
A-men.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

M. N. MEIGS FRED. SCHILLING


VOICES and ORGAN
1. There's a won - der - ful tree, a won - der - ful tree, The
2. 'Tis not a - lone in the sum - mer's sheen, Its
3. 'Tis still a - light with its ta - pers' glow, That
hap-py chil-dren re - joice to see, Spread-ing its bran-ches year by year, It
boughs are broad and its leaves are green; It blooms for us when the wild winds blow; And
flash on shin - ing eyes be - low, And the strange sweet fruit on each la - den bough, Is
comes from the for - est to flour-ish here. Oh, this beau-ti-ful tree, with its
earth is white with feath-'ry snow: And this won-der-ful tree, with its
all to be pluck'd by the gath-'rers now. Oh! this won-der-ful tree, with its
bran-ches wide, Is al - ways, is al ways bloom-ing at Christ-mas-tide.
bran-ches wide, Bears man - y a gift for the Christ - mas, Christ-mas-tide.
bran-ches wide, We hail it with joy at the Christ - mas, Christ-mas-tide.

4

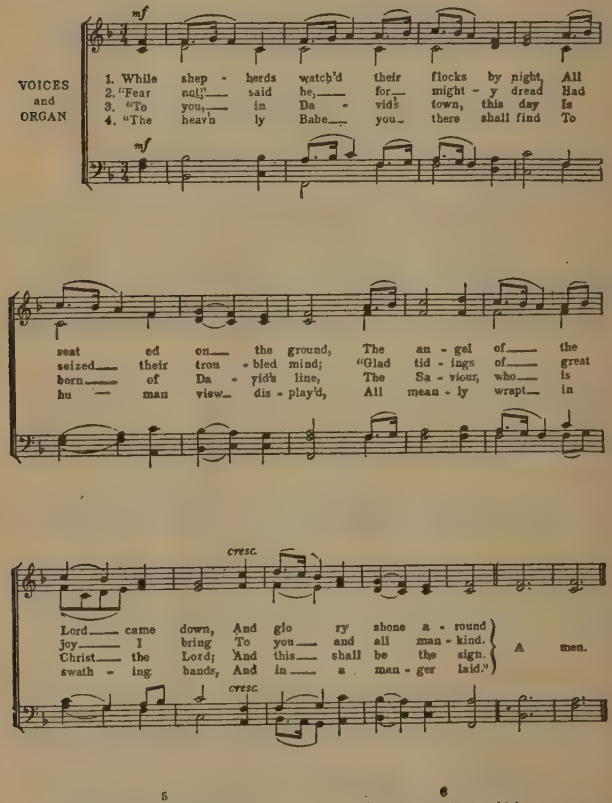
And a voice is telling, its boughs among,
Of the shepherds' watch and angels' song;
Of a holy Babe in a manger low,
The beautiful story of long ago,
When a radiant star threw its beams so wide,
To herald the earliest Christmas-tide.

5

Then spread thy branches, wonderful tree,
And bring some dainty gift to me,
And fill my heart with a burning love
To Him who came from His home above,
From His beautiful home with the glorified,
To give us the joys of Christmas-tide.

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS

NAHUM TATE W. TANSUR


mf
VOICES and ORGAN
1. While shep - herds watch'd their flocks by night, All
2. "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread Had
3. "To you, in Da - vid's town, this day Is
4. "The heav'n ly Babe you there shall find To
mf
seat ed on the ground, The an - gel of the
seized their trou - bled mind; "Glad tid - ings of great
born of Da - vid's line, The Sa - viour, who is
hu man view dis - play'd, All mean - ly wrapt in
cresc.
Lord came down, And glo ry shone a - round
joy I bring To you and all man - kind.
Christ the Lord; And this shall be the sign.
swath - ing bands, And in a man - ger laid."
A men.
cresc.

5

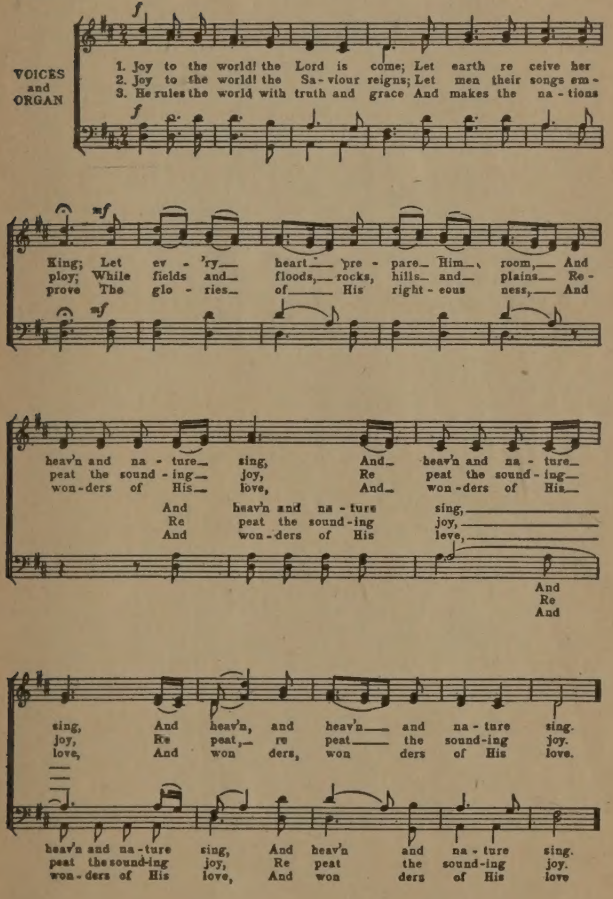
Thus spake the seraph: and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

6

"All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heav'n to men
Begin and never cease."

JOY TO THE WORLD!

ISAAC WATTS GEORGE FRIEDERIC HANDEL


VOICES and ORGAN
1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let earth re ceive her
2. Joy to the world! the Sa- viour reigns; Let men their songs em -
3. He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions
King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him room, And
ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Re -
prove The glo - ries of His right - eous ness, And
heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
peat the sound - ing joy, Re peat the sound - ing
won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His
And heav'n and na - ture sing,
Re peat the sound - ing joy,
And won - ders of His love,
And
Re
And
sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re peat, re peat the sound - ing joy.
love, And won ders, won ders of His love.
heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture sing.
peat the sound-ing joy, Re peat the sound-ing joy.
won - ders of His love, And won ders of His love

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